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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# The CHANGING ROLE of the NEWFOUNDLAND SUPERINTENDENT of EDUCATION, 1969 - 1994

By

David R. Streifling ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR of PHILOSOPHY.

Department of
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Edmonton, Alberta
SPRING, 1995

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David R. Streifling

***Permanent Address:***

2 Hagen Place
Mount Pearl, Newfoundland
CANADA
A1N 3X9

Date: 20 APRIL 1995

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled ***The CHANGING ROLE of the NEWFOUNDLAND SUPERINTENDENT of EDUCATION*** submitted by **David R. Streifling** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy**.

M. Haughey

Dr. M. L. Haughey, Supervisor

R. G. McIntosh

Dr. R. G. McIntosh

Dr. D. M. Richards

Dr. D. Collett

Dr. R. Hayden

Dr. F. Peters

J. Warren

Dr. P. J. Warren, External Examiner

Date: 18 April 1995

## Abstract

*The Changing Role of the Newfoundland Superintendent of Education* was designed as a descriptive-historical study for the purpose of examining changes in the role of superintendents of education in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador over the approximate quarter century between the Warren Royal Commission on Education implemented in the late 1960s and the Williams Royal Commission on Education of the early 1990s. Its findings described the present role of Newfoundland superintendents of education, identified role changes over time, and explored the causes of those changes. Data were collected from a population of 30 present and recent superintendents by means of two concurrent collection strategies: (a) semi-structured interviews were conducted among a stratified sample of the population, and (b) a survey questionnaire which had been administered to superintendents in 1972 was re-administered to the entire study population late in 1993. Interviews were audio taped, transcribed, and organized via content analysis; and questionnaire responses were averaged, ranked, and compared with those of 22 years earlier.

The data portrayed a role characterized by widely varied pressures and responsibilities. Superintendents attached great importance to their relationship with their boards, and particularly in the larger boards, they concentrated their personal attention on the administrative areas at and above the board level, while delegating many other functions such as staffing, facility and financial management, and even instructional leadership to other members of a superintendency team. This concept of a superintendency team was one of the major findings which emerged from the study.

Superintendents spoke of a better educated, more politically astute, more demanding public, including parents and other stake holders. They spoke of greater accountability on all fronts, and of increased pressure from the media. Over the quarter century, a new genre of board member emerged, and the decision making processes of boards became more complex as a result of members' insistence on being part of that process and wanting to make well-informed choices. Superintendents continue to be

leaders of their boards, but the nature of leadership has changed to the point where present superintendents must lead in a manner in which others will follow.

Changing social conditions and changing economic conditions were found to be the most significant forces producing role changes. Dealing with the pressures for a wider range of program offerings, greater accessibility, and a host of other increasing expectations has often been frustrating, as the demands of the public continued to increase long after the economic prosperity of the 1970s and the early 1980s had begun to fade. Together with other social issues such as child abuse, dysfunctional families, changing morals, the present political uncertainty, a changing legal context, and a changing technology; these forces have impacted and will likely continue to impact the role of the Newfoundland superintendent of education in the future.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

When a major undertaking such as the this research project has been completed, it is appropriate to express appreciation to those without whose assistance, it would have been much more difficult, or impossible. But when it comes to naming individuals, there is always the possibility of omitting someone whose help and support have been significant. Nevertheless, I wish to express appreciation to a number of individuals and groups, and to those others whom I may fail to mention by name.

I wish to express my appreciation to the professional staff of the Department of Educational Policy Studies of the University of Alberta, to my advisory committee, and in particular to my major professor, Dr. Margaret Haughey, for her assistance throughout the entire research process from the design of the study to its completion. Her patience and belief in me as a researcher, and her capacity to focus ideas and assist in their articulation were invaluable. Also deserving of special mention is Dr. P. J. Warren of St. John's, who agreed to serve in the role of external examiner.

To my colleagues, the superintendents of education in the province of Newfoundland, I express my sincere gratitude. Without their outstanding co-operation this study would have been impossible. Further, to the work of Dr. Len Williams, and to the earlier work and questionnaire of Frank J. King I am indebted. I express my appreciation for the contributions of these two individuals. And to the staff of Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II Library, I express appreciation for ready access to numerous needed resources.

Finally of no less importance, I appreciate the support of my wife, Jean, my son Jeffrey, and my daughter Julianna, whose patience and relentless belief in me kept me going when the journey seemed endless. To all of these, and to those others whom I have failed to mention by name, a big THANK YOU.

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## Chapter One

# Introduction

In the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador (officially the Province is called Newfoundland, but in practice it is often referred to as the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador), the office of the Superintendent of Education is an administrative position which has evolved into its present form over a period of more than a century. Although not specifically mandated by provincial legislation, it is the present practice that in the 27 school boards functioning in Newfoundland, the role of Superintendent of Education is that of Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Superintendents are in a sensitive position -- hired by school boards, yet in function connected to and indirectly accountable to the Department of Education. At the board level, they are expected to be leaders in both the administrative and the visionary sense, and at the same time to be sensitive to and to follow board actions and policies. Yet within the scope of their delegated authority, they act on behalf of the board, and in many ways their word is law.

Superintendents are not civil servants, yet they are indirectly accountable to the Department of Education for the implementation of its policies, and responsible for the communication of a wide variety of information, connecting the board to the Department, and the Department to the board. Being in the middle and being viewed as a vital two-way link in the educational delivery system, they are in a unique position both to influence government policy, and to control school board practice.

It was as a result of a Royal Commission on Education in the 1960s that the Department of Education Act (1968) and the Schools Act (1969) defined a new role for superintendents; or in the opinion of some, actually created a new position using the old title. In the spring of 1992, a second Royal Commission on education completed its work.

At the time of writing, the final impact of the report of this second royal commission was still uncertain, but along with the entire education system in Newfoundland, the role of the Superintendent of Education had been under serious review, and was

almost certain to experience major changes in the years just ahead. Therefore, this study of the "changing role of the superintendent" covering the last 25 years, was undertaken for the purpose of describing the present reality and documenting changes, in the belief that it would enrich our understanding of the present and provide an important benchmark for future changes.

### *Background to the Study*

Newfoundland became Canada's tenth province in 1949. Prior to this it had been a crown colony of Great Britain, and the remnants of its deeply British heritage are still evident in many aspects of its culture and laws. The first schools in the colony were established by Christian churches and "societies" two centuries before union with Canada. In recognition of the churches' commitment to and support of education over the years, the continuation of the "denominational education system" was legally guaranteed in the Terms of Union with Canada in 1949. As the Terms of Union were being negotiated, the Newfoundland delegation insisted that the following be included as Term 17. (It has thus become a part of the British North America Act.):

> In and for the Province of Newfoundland the Legislature shall have exclusive authority to make laws in relation to education, but the Legislature will not have authority to make laws prejudicially affecting any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools, common (amalgamated) schools, or denominational colleges, that any class or classes of persons have by law in Newfoundland at the date of Union, and out of public funds of the Province of Newfoundland, provided for education,
>
> (a) all such schools shall receive their share of such funds in accordance with scales determined on a non-discriminatory basis from time to time by the Legislature for all schools then being conducted under authority of the Legislature; and
>
> (b) all such colleges shall receive their share of any grant from time to time voted for all colleges then being conducted under authority of the Legislature, such grant being distributed on a non-discriminatory basis. (cited in Rowe, 1976, p. 146)

*The First Three Centuries (1497 - 1800)*

For three centuries after the historic voyage of John Cabot in 1497, Newfoundland struggled for its very right to exist. To many historians, it appears that the Newfoundland fisheries were viewed as a great resource to be exploited for the enrichment of the West Country merchants of England. For the most part, their mercantile ship-fishery interests determined British policy toward the territory (Rowe, 1964, p. 7). As a consequence, for example, laws restricting immigration -- and others restricting cutting timber, erecting buildings and fences, and even planting -- were enacted by the Imperial Government to discourage permanent settlement. The fortunes of the territory changed with the vicissitudes of the British and the French Empires -- the Hundred Years' War, the Seven Years' War, and the Napoleonic Wars -- the territory often experiencing its best times when Great Britain in particular was too busy elsewhere to be much bothered with Newfoundland.

As a result of the restrictive policies of the Imperial Government, the seasonal nature of the fishery, the abundance of rum for those who could afford it, the virtual non-existence of churches and schools, and the antagonism between the different religious and ethnic groups of settlers the Island slowly evolved into a fractured and very elementary society, or more accurately an aggregate of multiple societies. As the "planters" and the indigenous fisherman sought places where there was room to make a living free from the harassment of the often ruthless itinerant fishermen from England, as ethnic groups settled away from the territories claimed by each other, and as Protestants and Roman Catholics distanced themselves from each other because of mutual distrust, gradually small communities appeared along most of the coastline of the Island, while the Imperial Government continued to treat the situation as illegal, or perhaps as a nuisance threatening the continued prosperity of the fishery.

In the 18th century when other British territories, specifically the American Colonies, were gaining independence, St. John's, the oldest city in North America "teemed with vagabonds, and law-breakers from England and Ireland who had come out to escape the rigorous penal laws, refugees from press-gangs. . ." (Rowe, 1964, p. 20). Sir Joseph Banks, who visited Newfoundland in 1766, described St. John's as

> "the most disagreeable town I ever met with . . . [it] cannot be compared to any I have seen . . . for dirt and filth of all kinds St. John's may, in my opinion, reign unrivalled as it far exceeds any fishing town I ever saw in England. Here is no regular street, the houses being built in rows immediately adjoining to the flakes, consequently no pavement. Offals of fish of all kinds are strewn about." (cited in Rowe, 1964, p. 33)

Throughout the island, during the same century, historians universally paint a picture of "living conditions, customs, and manners as being akin to barbarism and savagery. . . . Famines, epidemics, and conflagrations were so common as to make reading about them almost monotonous. . . . The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel report for 1790 states that 'the generality are a barbarous, perfidious and cruel people'" (Rowe, 1964, p. 19).

In summary, the more conservative historians suggest that:

> Conditions in Newfoundland were the logical results of a policy which even as late as 1797 would not tolerate the enclosing of ground or the building of a chimney. It was not until 1811 that permanent buildings were permitted, and not until 1813 could settlers get a grant for the land they occupied. Only in 1825 was road-building started between St. John's, with a population of 12,000, and nearby settlements. The absence of law-enforcement agencies, of clergymen and teachers; the cumbersome and usually futile practice of sending criminals to England to be tried; the long period of winter inactivity and the availability of rum, all contributed toward a society in which cultural and moral values were virtually non-existent. (Rowe, 1964, pp. 20-21)

Although there is evidence to prove that, perhaps in spite of laws to the contrary, land was bought and sold, that houses with chimneys were built prior to 1800, and that conditions were by no means uniform throughout the island, the existence of a very primitive and fractured society up until the beginning of the 19th century was a precondition for the development of the primitive and fractured education system which developed belatedly in the 19th and 20th centuries.

### *The 19th Century and Pre-Confederation 20th Century (1800 - 1949)*

The first formal school in Newfoundland is believed to have been established in the community of Bonavista in 1722 (Watson, MacLeod, Butland, Fradsham, Mosher, and Hall, 1989, p. 137). But one hundred years later, the number had risen to only some twenty schools, all established and operated under the authority of a variety of

religious societies. The earliest effort on the part of government to become involved in education was the first Education Act of 1836, which provided financial assistance to religious societies to establish and operate schools.

A second Education Act (1843) instituted separate school boards for the Catholic and Protestant denominations, and granted authority for the appointment of a "fit and proper person" to serve as "school inspector" -- a Catholic inspector, and a Protestant one, alternating annually. Many Education Acts followed, seeming to become almost an annual event, but those of certain years are outstanding in the historical chronicle because they did more than simply vote the funding for that particular year (Rowe, 1964, pp. 63-71). A third noteworthy Education Act (1858) provided for two inspectors simultaneously, and also enlarged their duties (Watson et al., 1989, pp. 137-138).

In 1874, Newfoundland's denominational education system became a formal reality. Major Protestant denominations were given grants equal in proportion to that provided to the Roman Catholics. In 1903, the Seventh-day Adventists, and in 1954, the Pentecostals joined the Anglicans, the Methodists, and the Salvation Army with their own separate systems. School boards multiplied until by 1960 there were approximately 315 of them (Sampson, 1965, p. 118).

The Education Act of 1895 established a **Council of Higher Education** in response to the demand for some degree of co-ordination within the provincial system. This council, made up of the denominational superintendents and government educational officials, evolved into a major policy-making body which was to function for more than the next 50 years. It represented the government's first significant move towards taking control of education (Rowe, 1964, p. 69; and Watson et al., 1989, p. 138).

> With the (Education) Act of 1916 the government's stake in education became preponderant and decisive. Hitherto, its chief role had been that of a contributor; now it had assumed major financial responsibility. The Act provided for a total grant of $367,000 (up from $70,000 in 1895). . . . (Rowe, 1964, p. 69)

Surprisingly, the Department of Education was not established until 1920. But by 1935, under the progressive leadership of Professor Lloyd Shaw, a new "counsellor-and-friend" role was envisaged and promulgated for the eleven "Supervising Inspectors" at that time. It was after Newfoundland's entry into the Canadian Confederation in 1949

that the ideological shift begun by Shaw was completed. Emphasis had moved entirely from inspection to supervision (Watson et al., p. 145).

***Joining the Canadian Confederation***

Prior to 1949, Newfoundlanders had always prided themselves on their independence, but for them the years of the Great Depression had been exceptionally severe. For generations these hardy people had survived difficulties rarely equalled elsewhere, and after the relative respite from economic hardship afforded by the economic activity of the war years, the country of Newfoundland feared the return to the rigors of their earlier poverty. This may have been the determining factor in the decision to join the Canadian Confederation (Rowe, 1976, p. 54), an option that because of fear of property taxation had been flatly rejected 82 years earlier when the Canadian nation was formed (Rowe, 1976, p. 71).

It was during the relative prosperity of the war years that the Newfoundland government was able to pass a

> School Attendance Act whereby attendance for all children between the ages of seven and fourteen was made free of fees, and compulsory. This measure, which had been advocated by many, even as early as 1850, had been postponed by government after government largely on the grounds that enforcement would be too expensive and impractical. (Rowe, 1964, p. 71)

The changes that occurred almost immediately after joining the Canadian Confederation in 1949 made its enforcement possible.

Changes occurring in the province of Newfoundland as a result of Union with Canada included: relief in the maintenance of the (Newfoundland) national welfare, railway, mail, and telegraph systems; family allowances; old age pensions; unemployment insurance; veterans' benefits; and later old age security.

> When these were added to the economic resurgence that took place during the 1950's two overall facts could be noted: (1) Thousands of children who for economic and psychological reasons had not attended school at all, or at best had attended only sporadically, were to be found in regular attendance, nourished and clothed in a manner that made them indistinguishable from other children. . . . (2) With a vast improvement in their economic condition, the people of Newfoundland began to demand better

> facilities and higher standards of education for their children. (Rowe, 1964, p. 155; & 1976, p. 55)

Over the years, education was never fully funded by government, and school boards had to resort to various devices to provide the bare necessities -- school fees, in-kind donations of labour or rough building materials, teacher salaries subsidized by philanthropic societies from abroad, support from local businesses, or whatever. Surprisingly, the laws of Newfoundland made no provision for any local taxation for education until the passage of the School Tax Act in 1954. School boards experienced strong public resistance in securing revenues under this Act, and after the abolition of student tuition fees in 1967 (Rowe, 1976, p. 77) even a new stronger School Tax Act in 1970 failed to bring equity into either the tax system or the school system. "Nevertheless, the proceeds from the school taxes for most of the boards represented the difference between a primitive educational set-up and a relatively sophisticated one, and in some cases the difference between solvency and bankruptcy" (Rowe, 1976, p. 76).

***The Warren Royal Commission***

During the 1950's and 1960's pressures mounted for educational change. Newfoundland experienced major improvements in infra-structure and in communication. A consolidation movement resulted as a previously fractured society was joined together by new roads and communication links. Educational and key church leaders saw room for greater co-operation among the boards -- room to share services and facilities. Rowe (1964) highlighted the moderating positions of the mainline Protestant churches regarding the exercise of their constitutional rights (pp. 97-102), but he could not have known at that time just how far inter-denominational co-operation would extend, nor how the new spirit of co-operation and compromise would contribute to the major restructuring which would occur within five years of the publication of his work, *The Development of Education in Newfoundland*. By December 1964, the new spirit of co-operation and the general call for improvement in education combined with other factors in prompting government to establish a "Royal Commission on Education and Youth" (Rowe, 1976, p. 144). This was a major step, as the following illustrates:

> A landmark in the evolution of the province's educational system, and particularly the superintendency, occurred with the appointment of a Royal

> Commission in 1964, headed by Dr. P. J. Warren of Memorial University. (Watson et al., 1989, p. 146)

The Warren Royal Commission released its report in two parts: Volume I in January of 1967, dealing primarily with educational organization, and Volume II in the following October, dealing with finance among other things. In the first part, the Commission found that although significant improvement had been made in education since 1949, there continued to be serious deficiencies in student performance levels, in teacher qualifications, in building adequacy and quality, in library facilities, in access to higher grades, in funding levels, in student transportation, and in supervision of instruction. Tiny isolated schools and duplication of services were identified as factors contributing to the problem (Rowe, 1976, pp. 147-148). Two major recommendations made in Part I are significant to the present study: (a) that the Department of Education be reorganized on a functional rather than a denominational basis, and (b) that the multiplicity and overlapping of school districts and school boards be lessened by reducing the number of districts from 230 to 35 (Rowe, 1976, p. 148).

With regard to the reorganization of the Department, a differing minority report was presented by the three Roman Catholic members of the Commission who opposed that recommendation because they considered it outside of the terms of reference given to the Commission, and because its implementation would contravene Section 17 of the Terms of Union with Canada. In the end, a compromise reached in February 1968 opened the way for the Department of Education Act that May. The Roman Catholics agreed to the recommended changes in the Department of Education subject to the establishment of Denominational Education Committees (DEC's) and a Denominational Policy Commission where denominational interests would continue to be addressed. Under the Act, the denominational superintendents were eliminated and the Department of Education was assigned four major responsibilities which continue to the present: responsibility for (a) instruction, (b) chief superintendency, (c) special services, and (d) administration and planning (Rowe, 1976, pp. 163-164).

The second major recommendation of Volume I precipitated the Schools Act (1969) which saw the merger of Anglican, United Church, Salvation Army, Presbyterian, and later Moravian boards into Integrated Boards. The Royal Commission was not the

cause of integration, but perhaps a catalyst which accelerated and climaxed a process which had been quickening since Confederation with Canada. Additionally and subsequently, many of the smaller boards were consolidated so that according to Rowe (1976, p. 154) the total number of boards was reduced to a mere 36 by 1975. The old breed of superintendents, having been eliminated at the Department level by the Act of the previous year, the title was now re-introduced to name a new class of school board appointees, with responsibilities changed to reflect their altered loyalties and the reality of the new larger boards which they served. "Newfoundland superintendents had previously been civil servants, with the dual role of representing their respective churches as well as being officials of the Department of Education. The new breed of superintendents were to be chief executive officers and education leaders at the local school board level" (Watson et al., 1989, p. 147). So great was this change that in the opinion of some, the Superintendent of Education was an entirely new position created by the 1969 Schools Act.

At the same time, the position of assistant superintendent was also changed from a department to a board appointment. However, ten years later, a task force report on education found that confusion in the role of school board supervisors existed, and very few assistant superintendent appointments had been made. It was as a result of the task force's recommendations, that "in September 1980 most school districts in Newfoundland and Labrador had hired, or were in the process of hiring . . . assistant superintendents" (Lane, 1983, pp. 4 & 5).

Amont other things, volume II of the Warren Royal Commission dealt with finances. The findings in this area were startling:

> Expenditure per pupil in 1963 was $188 in Newfoundland, compared with $431 in Canada as a whole. . . . Out of every thousand persons 286 in Newfoundland were in elementary and secondary schools compared with 233 for Canada. In that year the Newfoundland Government was spending 28 per cent of its total revenue on education as compared with 33 per cent in Canada generally. . . . Per capita personal income -- $1,006 in Newfoundland, $2,031 in Ontario, and $1,743 for the ten provinces. . . . Expenditure per pupil on teachers' salaries was $107 in Newfoundland compared with $203 for all Canada. (Rowe, 1976, p. 79)

The commissioners recommended that "the Provincial Government make every effort to impress upon the Federal Government the necessity for more federal funds for education in Newfoundland, to be provided either directly to education or through increased general equalization grants" (Rowe, 1976, p. 80). That resultant efforts of the Provincial Government met with considerable success is indicated by the fact that under the DREE (Department of Regional Economic Expansion) agreements signed between the provinces and the Federal Government in 1970 and 1973, Newfoundland realized in a combination of direct aid and long term loans $43 million (Rowe, 1976, p. 82).

***Between the Two Royal Commissions***

In the years following the implementation of some of the major recommendations of the Warren Royal Commission a number of significant events took place. First, the year 1972 witnessed the signing of the first "Collective Agreement" between the Provincial Government and the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. The Association, long an organization with strictly professional concerns had become a militant labour union, concerned with higher salaries and better working conditions for teachers while continuing to fill its original mandate. Second, as alluded to earlier, 1980 was the year in which the employment of assistant superintendents commenced in all boards in the Province virtually "over night" (Lane, 1983, pp. 4-5). Third, at about the same time, a shift in Department of Education policy introduced a new category of school board employee -- the "program co-ordinator." Finally, also in the early 1980's, the revised high school program and the addition of Grade 12 broadened the "instructional" component of the mandate of the Department of Education, at the same time placing new responsibilities upon school boards.

***The Williams Royal Commission (1990 - 1992)***

In spite of the improvements in education represented by the restructuring after the Warren Royal Commission and those witnessed generally during the two decades which followed it, again public pressure began to build for greater accountability, greater efficiency, and the elimination of duplication of services in education. As a result, in August of 1990, a second Royal Commission, chaired by Dr. Len Williams, the "Royal

Commission of Inquiry into the Delivery of Programs and Services in Primary, Elementary, and Secondary Education," was established by the Newfoundland Government. In the words of the commissioners:

> There remains throughout the province a wide-spread and well-founded concern about the quality and direction of schooling. Declining enrolments, demands for access to governance from groups not now enfranchised, pressures to increase achievement levels, and decreasing financial resources have created demands for change which cannot be ignored. (Williams, 1992a, p. xv)

The Williams Royal Commission consulted widely both within Newfoundland and across Canada. They conducted 53 on-site visits of schools and 32 public hearings. They conducted a public opinion poll and sifted through 1041 submissions. In addition, they examined four models for governance ranging from the status quo (which they labelled "Model A") to a "rationalized non-denominational system" (their "Model D"). The Commission found that many of the problems facing the educational system are in reality problems of society with which teachers must deal. They concluded that the Newfoundland public, although desirous of changes in educational governance, were "not in favour of creating a secular, public system of schooling" (Williams, 1992a, p. xviii).

The report of the Commission -- *Our Children Our Future* -- was released to the public on 15 May 1992. It made a total of 211 recommendations, the first

> That, recognizing the reality of a pluralistic democracy, declining enrolments and diminishing resources, the proposed model which is responsive to the needs of all constituent groups, yet recognizes the desire of the majority to retain a school system based on Judeo-Christian principles, be adopted and implemented (Williams, 1992a, p. 221)

appears to refer to the Report's Model D. Recommendations 26 - 28 deal with the restructuring of school boards, reducing the provincial number to nine.

Dialogue with the churches began in 1993, and continued on into 1995, a virtual deadlock. Without mutual agreement (or an amendment to the Canadian Constitution) the implementation of the Report's restructuring recommendations appeared impossible. Understandably, debate in the public arena seemed to focus on the estimated 20% of the Report dealing with governance, much more than on the remaining 80% upon which most stakeholders generally agree.

***The New "Mood" in Education***

Indicative of a new mood in education, and of new expectations for education are the Canadian government documents *A Lot to Learn* (Economic Council of Canada, 1992), and *Inventing Our Future* (Steering Group on Prosperity, 1992). Both indicated that the policy of the Canadian Federal Government was placing increased importance on education as "the key to continuous improvement in the standard of living" (Economic Council of Canada, 1992, p. 46). They spoke of the greater challenges facing teachers; they were concerned about declining academic achievement among students -- especially in the maths and sciences, about the 30% of students who never complete high school, about inadequate career counselling, and about the present "trial and error" method of moving students from school to the workplace.

> There is broad agreement that improving the quality and relevance of education and training is the most important priority if we are to prosper. Canadians want refocused, reinvigorated learning systems with stronger ties to the community and the working world. (Steering Group on Prosperity, 1992, p. 35)

In the 1992 government document *Change & Challenge: A Strategic Economic Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador*, recognition was given to public demands for a more focused curriculum, which is also more relevant, and more challenging; one that better links between the K - 12 system and post-secondary education, and the private sector. The new educational emphasis of the Newfoundland government was articulated in the following strategy statement:

> The Province will undertake initiatives to ensure that the education and training system is more responsive to changing labour market demands for a highly skilled, innovative and adaptable workforce. Special initiatives will be pursued which allow governments, business and labour to work together to improve the level and quality of education, training and re-training. (*Change & Challenge*, p. 25)

It is noteworthy that apart from the implied inclusion of the Department of Education in "governments," there is no mention of the school system, the churches, or even generic education among the stake holders herein mandated to work together "to improve . . . education, training, and re-training."

The Williams Royal Commission recognized among the challenges currently facing education, the challenge "to provide for an education system that is dynamic,

responsive, flexible, and committed to self-improvement" (Williams, 1992a, p. 210). Without question the educational stage is set for significant change in Newfoundland. Undoubtedly, the historical chronicle will be negotiating a rocky turn, and passing another major milestone in the near future. And in the context of the recent past -- especially that period between the two Royal Commissions, in an atmosphere of imminent change, the question begging answer is: "What have been and will be the implications for the Superintendents of Education in Newfoundland?"

### *Evolution of the Superintendency*

As the number of schools increased, the government gradually began funding education through the churches. To provide for some degree of accountability and uniformity, school "visitors," later "visiting inspectors," and still later "inspectors" were appointed by government. But from 1876 to 1968, the title "superintendent" referred to Department of Education officials who were really civil servants appointed to represent the recognized religious denominations.

These superintendents were both senior officials within the Department structure and at the same time representatives of their respective churches. Furthermore, they were intimately involved in administering the educational system in the field, despite the fact that there were local school boards. They hired teachers, distributed funds, and generally controlled local educational operations from St. John's (Watson et al., 1989, p. 138). Although church representatives, their major role was to represent Department interests at the board level. In contrast, present superintendents represent board interests at both the board and Department levels.

Filling a role between the Department and the school boards, in some respects closer to that of the present superintendents, were the "visitors," "visiting inspectors," and "inspectors" who were nonetheless also civil servants. According to Snelgrove (1965), the first supervising inspectors were appointed in 1935. They were not intended to replace the superintendents at the Department level, but to provide "professional personnel to undertake supervisory tasks" (p. 20). Regarding their role, Rowe (1964) quotes the following written by L. W. Shaw, then Secretary of the Department of Education, in the annual report for 1942:

> The work of the supervisory staff, like that of the teaching staff, has for its object the improvement of instruction. In a country like Newfoundland such a task is by no means an easy one. . . . In the field itself classroom visitation, conferences with teachers, chairmen, and parents, cannot but be helpful and stimulating, especially to those labouring under difficult conditions, and in the more isolated sections. As stated by one supervisor . . . the usual method of supervision in the schools is observation, consultation, and demonstration. (p. 146)

The role of the new superintendent was broadly "defined" by the 1969 Schools Act, which gave the incumbent seventeen responsibilities. However, the actual nature of that role was subsequently modified, as the Act itself was implemented, and as various incumbents further re-defined it by their own actions, abilities, ideas, and values while they served as superintendent. And during the years since 1969, other influences within various boards and the broader environment have also affected the superintendent's role, and further changed its nature.

Because the superintendent's role was not static, and because in Newfoundland no comprehensive study of that role had been undertaken since 1969, it was anticipated that a descriptive study of the role of the Newfoundland Superintendent of Education would provide valuable information regarding its present characteristics. It was also anticipated that an identification and analysis of factors which have altered the nature of that role over time would provide significant historical knowledge.

### *Statement of the Problem*

The purpose of this study is to address the following research problem, and to find answers to the sub-questions which arise therefrom:

> *How has the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland changed since its definition in the 1969 Schools Act?*

A number of more specific questions served as guides to the development of the study and to the analysis of the data. These sub-questions were as follows:

1. What are the present *role expectations* associated with the office of superintendent of education in Newfoundland?
2. What are the perceptions of Newfoundland superintendents regarding the *nature of changes in their role* since 1969?
3. What are the perceptions of Newfoundland superintendents regarding the *causes of changes in their role* since 1969?

### *Significance of the Study*

The study has both theoretical and practical significance. In theory, the outcomes of this study should be of interest both to scholars studying the influence of environmental factors upon the roles of persons working within those environments, as well as to others studying the education superintendency.

In a practical sense the results should be of interest to persons whose role is being influenced by environmental factors. Understanding how roles may be altered by environments may help those affected to cope with the changes in a less stressful manner, to accept change as unavoidable, and to anticipate and successfully make the consequent transitions and/or personal adjustments with minimum trauma.

Also, in a very specific practical sense, the results should be of interest to superintendents in Newfoundland. Providing a broad description of the forces shaping their own roles, together with a summarization of perceptions of other superintendents should help them to understand better the nature of their own work in relation to its provincial and national context.

The timing of this study is also significant. The superintendent of education as a school board employee came into existence as a result of the Warren Commission (1964 - 1968) and the Schools Act (1969). At the time of this writing it was nearly a quarter century since the implementation of that major change. On May 15, 1992, the Williams Royal Commission unveiled its report, *Our Children Our Future*, outlining proposals for sweeping changes to every aspect of the educational system in Newfoundland. An historical study of the role of the Superintendent could provide (a) a description of the present reality, documenting those changes that have occurred since the Warren Royal Commission, and (b) a base line for future comparisons after the implementation of the Report of the Williams Royal Commission.

## Chapter Two

# Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Because the conceptual framework of this study has grown out of concepts originating in the literature, and because its adequate articulation is a precondition to the design of the study in Chapter Three, it has been included together with the literature review, forming the second major division of this chapter.

### *Review of Related Literature*

The literature related to the problem under study falls into two subject categories, the first rather broadly focused, and the second much more narrowly so. The two subject categories of literature reviewed are: (a) general literature on the **role of the superintendent of education**, and (b) literature and previous research on the **Newfoundland superintendency**, including government documents and the reports of two royal commissions.

### *The Role of the Superintendent*

Since literature on the role of the superintendent encompasses a very broad area, the review was deliberately restricted to literature which appeared to have some relevance to the Newfoundland situation, either by geographic similarity/transferability, by dealing with factors which it was believed might obtain in the Newfoundland setting, or by dealing with theoretical constructs which are generalizable to superintendency as a concept regardless of form, setting, or specific application.

The literature reviewed in this section has been organized into six sub-categories as follows: (a) history and development of the superintendency, (b) the work of superintendents, (c) requisite qualities of superintendents, (d) professional preparation and selection of superintendents, (e) factors influencing change in the superintendency, and (f) the future of the superintendency.

***The history and development of the superintendency.*** *The School Superintendency in Alberta -- 1976* is the report of an inquiry by L. W. Downey

Research Associates, which was prepared just six years after the new Alberta School Act of 1970 "mandated that every local authority . . . employ its own superintendent" (p. 1). The transitional years after 1970 saw many strains and stresses, and much confusion regarding the role of superintendent, and as a consequence this study was commissioned. Downey concluded that in general, school boards tend to see the superintendent as a business executive type, in contrast to the educational statesman image held by professional educators.

An interesting overview of the superintendency in British Columbia, which also made some comparisons across the Canadian scene, was furnished by Storey (1987). He contacted all provinces except Prince Edward Island, and found that in all of those contacted, superintendents had become local appointees prior to 1987. In Newfoundland the year was 1969.

Embedded within the history of education in Newfoundland, Rowe (1964 & 1976) and Watson et al. (1989) trace the evolution of the Newfoundland superintendency as a part of the overall development of education up to the present. The evolution of both the system and the superintendency are detailed in Chapter 1, and do not need to be repeated here except to note that the restructuring of 1969 witnessed the arrival of a "new breed of superintendents" (Watson et al., 1989, p. 147), different in both function and loyalty from any previous educational leader in the province.

***The work of superintendents***. Griffiths (1966, p. 68) spoke of the difficulty experienced in attempting to describe in generality the work of a superintendent. This difficulty was addressed thirteen years later by the Duignan study mentioned in the following paragraph. Griffiths stated that "one could start with a description of what might happen in the office of any superintendent and impose some conceptual scheme upon these events" (p. 68). He then went on to propose a framework of four parts into which the superintendent's job can be divided: (a) improving educational opportunity, (b) obtaining and developing personnel, (c) maintaining effective relations with the community, and (d) providing and maintaining funds and facilities. (1966, pp. 70 & 71) In carrying out each of the four parts of their work, Griffiths suggested that superintendents were required to use conceptual skills, human skills, and technical skills (1966, p.

71). (The Griffiths framework was later adapted in King (1972) as the conceptual framework for his questionnaire which was borrowed for the present study.)

Duignan (1979) studied *The Administrative Behaviours of Superintendents* in the province of Alberta. He claimed that the superintendency studies which he had reviewed

> Failed to describe the actual activities engaged in by the superintendent. The functions of the superintendent are couched in terms similar to those of Gulick's handy acronym [POSDCORB], and the activities, tasks, duties or responsibilities refer to broad categorizations of activities, for example, instructional improvement and evaluation, personnel selection, development and evaluation, and public relations. (pp. 31-32)

His study focused totally on what administrators do, or their behaviors (e.g.: answering the telephone, attending a meeting, travelling, observing a teacher, etc.). He concluded that

> The superintendent's administrative behavior is not as planned and organized as is suggested in the literature. . . . He deals with a large number and variety of issues and problems each day and he rarely enjoys the luxury of being able to concentrate for long periods of time on any one task. In fact the sequence of behaviors related to any one topic, issue, or problem is often spread out over a number of days or even weeks. (1979, pp. 207-208)

By design, the Duignan study stopped with describing what happened in superintendents' offices, and did not attempt to impose any conceptual scheme to systematize his findings. However, the wide range of activities identified by him in which superintendents find themselves involved is indicative of the great variety of responsibilities they carry.

In his Alberta study of the *Role of the Superintendent*, Green (1988) reported that a total of 11 role studies of superintendents had been conducted using a "superintendent behaviour questionnaire" developed by Fast (1968). He reviewed fourteen other "task studies," but developed his own questionnaire from a role framework of tasks, skills, and personal characteristics -- seeing all as integrally involved in the concept of role. He found that the most important skills for the superintendent were delegating responsibilities, making decisions, and organizing, analyzing, and synthesizing information.

From an American perspective, in 1994 Thompson envisioned a distinct leadership role for both school principals and district superintendents. In relation to educational reform, driven by economic forces and educational equity issues, the new duties of superintendents included helping to establish organizational vision and mission. In this they required the help of their boards.

***Requisite Qualities for Superintendents.*** In a study in the province of Ontario, Parsons (1971) analyzed supervisory roles in school systems. Out of 26 possible choices presented in a questionnaire, Parsons' respondents ranked area superintendents seventh in influence and effectiveness in the area of supervision of instruction. In their study which included a focus on leadership in school improvement, Griffin and Chance (1994) found the role of the superintendent vital to overall success.

Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins (1992) identified the development of a positive and supportive "school culture, ethos, or climate" (p. 41) as a requisite responsibility of leadership. Coleman and Laroque (1990, pp. 185 - 198) also deal with the development of "organizational culture" and "ethos" as administrative imperatives:

> In respect to both academic purposes and nurturance purposes the most general themes running through . . . are strong expectations for improvement, an emphasis on collective responsibility (particularly of school groups) for planning improvement, the provision of support and the continuous monitoring of growth. For administrators productive school or district ethos constitutes their particular contribution to educational quality. Hence the dominant metaphor emerging from our research is that of the administrator as "skillful gardener." (Coleman & Laroque, 1990, p. 192)

Their "skillful gardener" metaphor aptly illustrates their conception of the administrator's role in the development of school "ethos." Such an ethos depends upon the values and personal characteristics of incumbents, and Green (1988) found that "the three most important personal characteristics in the overall work of a superintendent were trustworthiness, consistency, and intelligence" (p. v).

In a role study with an evaluative dimension, Genge (1991) studied the characteristics of effectiveness in the superintendent's role. Genge found that in spite of a daily routine characterized by involvement in a great many varied activities, effective superintendents had distinct priorities, and ideas on how to achieve them. They had a clear

vision for their system, and understood that their main resource was people. To access this resource required "people skills:" "high integrity, sound knowledge bases, strong communication skills including listening, and a clear sense of direction. Visibility on school sites was [also] considered . . . crucial" (p. iv).

Downey 1976 spoke of the importance of leadership style, considering "whether the leader's image should be that of educational statesman or business executive and whether or not it is possible for him to project both" (p. 41). The contrast is similar to that between the transformational and the transactional paradigms of Coleman (1982) (see "the future of the superintendency" later in this chapter). Ingram and Miklos (1977) picked up on these analogies and stated:

> The superintendent must adopt a leadership style which is consistent with his personal characteristics and conception of the role, compatible with the situation and within the range of tolerance acceptable to other members of the system. . . . Undoubtedly, any superintendent will have to wear both [the educational statesman and the business executive] mantles at one time or another, and the effective superintendent will endeavor to strike a balance between these two roles depending on the particular situation. (p. 66)

The leadership style of educational administrators is discussed by Sergiovanni (1990, pp. 1-13) in his book, *Value-Added Leadership*. He contrasts the lack-lustre performance of American schools with the effectiveness of their Japanese counterparts, placing much of the blame and/or credit on very different approaches to educational leadership. In spite of noteworthy examples to the contrary, Sergiovanni accuses the majority of American administrators of "leadership by default." "Under leadership by default, persistence and perseverance give way to an ugly vision of schooling that communicates immediacy rather than growth, survival rather than standards, and despair rather than hope" (p. 11).

In contrast, what is needed is value-added leadership -- leadership which "engenders followership feelings and behaviours in teachers and students. Followers respond to beliefs and ideas rather than controls. They respond with passion and commitment and their performance is typically beyond that expected of subordinates" (Sergiovanni, 1990, p. 10). In other words, according to Sergiovanni, to be truly successful leaders, superintendents need to "make" their "followers" want to excel and

do more than the minimum requirement because in reality they are not made to feel that they are followers at all, but part of a team, all of whom aspire to reach the same goals.

The Burns concepts of transactional vs. transformational leadership (Coleman, 1982) closely parallels the Sergiovanni idea. No matter what it is called -- Genge's "people skills," Ingram and Miklos's "educational statesman," Sergiovanni's "value-added leadership," Coleman's "transformational leadership" -- there is strong consensus in the literature that superintendents need to be more than technocrats, no matter how successful they may be in that role.

***Professional preparation and selection of superintendents.*** The American author, Carlson, writing in 1972 stated that "the formal educational requirements for the superintendency include a bachelor's degree plus graduate work varying from a few hours of credit to two years work beyond the bachelor's degree, depending on the regulations of the several states" (p. 25). Under the Schools Act (1969, consolidated 1990) in Newfoundland at the present time, school boards "may appoint a district superintendent . . . whose professional qualifications are approved by the minister" (Section 17[1]). According to Watson et al. (1989, p. 156), the minimum educational requirement for the superintendency in Newfoundland is a Master's Degree in Education.

In 1966, Griffiths indicated that in the USA, there was no selection process in place to screen candidates for formal training for the superintendency. There is no evidence that it was any different in Canada. Griffiths stated that

> Since universities admit students to graduate study leading to the superintendency and do not actually select them for training for the position, 'admission' rather than 'selection' is a more apt term for this process. Teaching experience, a teacher certificate, or merely a bachelor's degree (of any variety) are the only requirements for admission into graduate study for administration. (p. 50)

The quotation identifies two difficulties: (a) the lack of a formal selection process, although the rigours of the course of study and the development of a "phased admission" policy at some universities (p. 51) might actually constitue a de facto selection process, and (b) the lack of specific training for the superintendency -- programs in administration being all that were generally available.

In 1989, Watson et al. declared: "It is generally recognized that the role of the superintendent has changed over the past twenty years, and that a high level of professional training, both in education and managerial skills, is now required" (p. 159). However, they itemized a number of problems that have been noted in regard to the professional preparation of superintendents: (a) lack of formal training programs in many regions, (b) new knowledge requirements (p. 152), (c) the question regarding whether certain dimensions of what is requisite to the position can actually be taught in a formal setting, and (d) the question of whose is the responsibility of preparation for the position. In 1929, Whitehead (cited in Griffiths 1966, p. 55) spoke of the concern in item "c" above in the following quotation:

> First hand knowledge is the ultimate basis of intellectual life. To a large extent book learning conveys second-hand information, and as such can never rise to the importance of immediate practice. . . . What the learned world tends to offer is one second-hand scrap of information illustrating ideas derived from another second-hand scrap of information. The second-handedness of the learned world is the secret of its mediocrity. It is tame because it has never been scared by facts.

Can the first-hand knowledge required in the superintendency actually be taught? It appears that through the years, the recognized advantages of on-the-job training have led at least some minds to question whether genuine administrative skills can be taught in a classroom, or in a structured training program.

Coleman (1982) contrasted "transactional" and "transforming" leadership (p. 45). The former is leadership consisting of a multiplicity of mechanistic functions such as providing facilities, resources, and even personnel; while the latter is leadership with a visionary focus -- the leader guided by an overriding concern for the improvement potential of each administrative action. Coleman stated: "There is some real concern that universities can develop leaders . . . (and) transforming leadership . . . probably does not fall into the category of things which can be taught in university settings" (1982, p. 55). And by implication, Watson et al. (1989, p. 159) are not very flattering in their appraisal of the effectiveness of present professional preparation programs for school superintendents. Looking wistfully to the future, they suggest that in response to identified needs for more knowledge in the areas of "political and legal matters, affirmative action, conflict resolution, technological change, and community education

. . . no doubt new programs and opportunities will develop in the next decade." The implication is that present professional development programs are inadequate to meet recognized needs of superintendents, who must continue to learn (or fail to learn) on the job.

In their work, *Developing Expert Leadership for Future Schools*; Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins (1992) discuss the weaknesses of formal preparation programs. The weaknesses which they have identified may be summarized as: (a) relevance of program content, (b) freedoms granted to trainees to select their own learning experiences, (c) failure of program to cover the full scope of the school-leader's role, and (d) the "training for activity" trap (which could be thought of as training for Coleman's "transactional leadership") (pp. 167, 168). The background for these claims is found in the overall premise of their book. They conceptualize leadership as problem-solving (pp. 8, 42). A problem consists of three ingredients: the givens, the goals, and the obstacles -- to illustrate: a less than desirable situation, a preferred situation, and difficulties to be overcome in order to reach the goal.

> When school-leaders are well informed about the givens in a problematic situation, clear about what goals, if accomplished, would solve the problem, and . . . have reliable procedures for overcoming obstacles, they are on . . . "high ground." But the ground on which school-leaders base their practices becomes increasingly swampy, as fewer and fewer of these conditions are met: the swamp is especially deep when one only vaguely understands the present situation, has no clear way of knowing what would be better, and lacks procedures for addressing the obstacles or constraints in the situation. (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992, p. 42)

It is relatively easy to design training programs for high ground decision making -- for transactional leadership. But it is the "swampiness" of the problem-solving associated with school improvement and the future needs of schools that makes the designing of training programs for transformational leadership a "swampy" issue in itself.

Regarding the availability of candidates when choosing a new administrator, Musella (1983) said "the number of available certified school administrators, be they principals or supervisory officers (superintendents), usually has not been a problem for school districts. . . . The pool of acceptable certified candidates ranges usually from adequate to oversupply in most jurisdictions" (p. 5). At times, particular locations and

unique circumstances do drastically reduce the number of candidates available. The challenge of course, is to select the individual best suited to a particular position. And a complex array of external factors such as (a) current labor market, (b) economic climate, (c) public opinion, (d) human rights legislation and policies, (e) certification regulations and procedures, and (f) enrolment status; and internal factors such as (a) collective bargaining agreements and (b) intra-organizational selection policies and procedures must all be considered in the decision (Musella, 1983, pp. 5 - 13). This process is further complicated by the choices selection committees must make between what Carlson calls the "place-bound" and the "career-bound" prospect, and the choice between "calling" from within or without the organization (1972, pp. 40, 75, 76).

Both Ingram and Miklos (1977) and Musella (1983) present selection/employment "models." Using the "inputs-process-outputs" paradigm, Ingram and Miklos have proposed a model less linear in structure than that of Musella, yet comprising essentially the same components (Ingram & Miklos, 1977, p. 7). Musella's book, *Selecting School Administrators*, is primarily a tool for systemizing the process of school administrator selection in six steps which if followed carefully will give a reasonable measure of objectivity to what is essentially a subjective process. The six steps include (a) clarifying system goals and priorities, (b) conducting needs assessment, (c) developing a job description, (d) recruiting, (e) data collection and analysis, and (f) screening and selection decision. To conduct the search, boards may set up a special search committee, hire an outside consultant, or in some cases even use the services of the outgoing superintendent (Watson et al., 1989, p. 157). Downey (1976) agrees, adding that it is important for boards to receive input from secretary-treasurers, trustees' associations, and the Department (p. 25). But whatever the selection process, according to Watson et al. (1989), "the final recommendations are made to the board by a committee of the board" (p. 157).

***Factors influencing change in the superintendency***. In 1994, Tewel found that in situations of reform and restructuring, the roles and responsibilities of upper level school executives and middle management were rapidly shifting. This was affecting superintendents personally, and calling for their leadership in building trust and a sense of mission among their subordinates. Kowalski and Oates (1993) indicated that as

school-based management and collaborative decision making are being implemented into the educational system, that the traditional "clockworks" role of superintendents will undergo transformation. They anticipated that in the future superintendents will need to be instructional, transformative, and visionary leaders capable of building trust, facilitating change, managing conflict, and taking risks in sharing or delegating power.

In recent years, a new generation of school board member has emerged, and according to Zlotkin (1993) the traditional relationship between the superintendent and the school board member, based on the trustees' lack of access to information and on both parties expectation that the paid expert should do all the work, is now outdated.

Ten years earlier, the US Government document, *A Nation at Risk (1983)*, had focused the attention of the American nation on the need for educational reform. Among the indicators of risk identified were: low ratings in international educational comparisons; extensive functional illiteracy; declining achievement in Physics, English, and general science; lower average tested achievement of students graduating from college; and necessity of basic skills remediation among business and military recruits. The report indicated strong public support for education, seeing it as a cornerstone upon which to build a superior industrial system and a strong military force. It clearly indicated that industry, business, and defense hold high expectations for education.

Griffiths (1966, pp. 81 - 90) identified four forces impacting the role of the superintendent in the USA. In a time of racial unrest and increasing US Federal Government involvement in education, his list in order of significance included: (a) the challenge of automation, (b) the challenge of teacher militancy, (c) the challenge of inter-racial tensions, and (d) the impact of federal involvement in education. It was considered probable that although almost 30 years later, at least some of these would apply in the Newfoundland situation.

The Downey Study (1976) developed a conceptual framework based on three sets of variables, represented on a three-dimensional matrix. The superintendency was viewed as "a system involving these sets of interacting variables: positional variables, situational variables, and time variables" (p. 6). The authors concluded that changes in the role of the superintendent between 1970 and 1976 coincided with the change from public servant to local board employee, but were not exclusively a result of that change

(p. 21). Role ambiguity, conflicting expectations, intra-board politics, and the shifting social context were listed among the significant forces of change.

Regarding changes in the role of the British Columbia superintendents, Storey (1987) said: "Changes in the face of the superintendency must be seen in the context of the economic, social, and political scene in British Columbia in the early 1980's" (p. 1).

Fullan, Parks, & Williams (1987) studied the role of the superintendent (or "supervisory officer") in Ontario. In their conceptual framework they include the following as impacting and/or determining the superintendent's role: (1) policy determinants of expectations, (2) system environmental factors, (3) intra-system context factors, (4) incumbent's personal profile, and (5) expectations held by role set.

Alberta Education's "Superintendent Qualifications Committee" (Speidelsbach, 1988) adopted Green's 1988 Framework for its study and recommendations. They found that "the behavior of superintendents will continue to be affected by the environment, and environmental changes can be viewed as a catalyst. As people and situations change, so the role of the superintendent will evolve" (Speidelsbach, 1988, p. 6).

Quite insightful in this area of the literature is Wirt (1990), whose work focused on the changing role of the superintendent in the state of Illinois. A number of forces which have tended to alter and re-shape the superintendent's role were identified and examined: job related stress, community expectations, conflict management, administrivia, and criticism against school professionals. Wirt stated, "Administrators and their boards faced challenges from: minorities, over equal educational opportunity; parents, over accountability; taxpayers, over financial costs and equity; teachers, over collective bargaining; students, over civil rights; and, eventually, state and federal governments over mandates" (p. 8). Regarding the impact of these forces on the superintendent's role, he further claimed that: "Amid . . . [an] environment of conflict, cost, and consequence, the superintendent will be found to have shifted from being education leader to a fort-holder and scapegoat. . . . [These are] factors that have transformed the superintendent's role over the last quarter century from an almost unchallenged leader and manager" (Wirt 1990; p. 5). One of Wirt's conclusions is that superintendents will seek personal survival and system maintenance in the face of conflict and administrivia, with the result that they lack time to fill the role of instructional leader (i.e., that they have

become "the missing link in instructional leadership"). On the other hand, the research of Bjork (1993) confirmed the importance of instructional leadership by superintendents, if schools are to be effective.

Government and business are joining in this "demand for higher standards," which is one of the five forces identified by Williams (1992b) as currently impacting education -- "forces which must be considered when planning for the future." Williams' list of forces also included: changing economic conditions, changing social conditions, changing population dynamics, and changing technology. The present study looked at the degree to which these forces which impact education in general, have impacted the role of the superintendent of education.

In a British Columbia royal commission's report pre-dating the Williams Commission, Sullivan (1988) discussed "factors shaping British Columbia schools and society." This commission mentioned as forces shaping education: the province's diverse cultural heritage, a tension between the call of the frontier and the call of the school bell, the forces changing the family from a stable social unit to a more fragile institution, and society's concept of leisure.

Kolawski and Oates, Zlotkin, Griffiths, Wirt, Williams, and Sullivan all listed forces which impact education and the superintendency. Because their lists contain both similarities and differences, it was thought important to determine which factors had most strongly affected the role of the superintendent in Newfoundland.

***The future of the superintendency***. A number of writers stress the inevitability of changing responsibilities. Alberta Education's "Superintendent Qualifications Committee" (Speidelsbach, 1988) stated that "As people and situations change, so the role of the superintendent will evolve" (p. 6). "The superintendent of the future will require many of the same skills, characteristics and task orientations that are required today, but there will be a new emphasis on human relations" (p. 4).

Griffiths (1966) stated "the changing attitude towards education in America, the history of the superintendency, and the nature of the problems facing education today all lead inevitably to a new concept of the role of the superintendent of schools" (p. 101). He went on to state that to be effective, the superintendent will not be able to abdicate his role in the instructional process, concentrating only on his role as "man who opens

the doors in the morning, who keeps the place clean -- painted when necessary -- who gets books and materials for teachers to work with" (p. 102). According to Griffiths, superintendents of the future must see themselves "first as educated men [sic] giving direction to the education of children and second as expediters of the educational process" (p. 102). They will need to be deeply involved (a) philosophically in the role of education in a changing world, (b) pragmatically in their own role as innovators -- agents of change -- "not weigh[ing] each suggested change with a businessman's view of pupil-teacher ratios or per-pupil costs, but rather with an educator's view of what the innovation will do for young people" (p. 103), and (c) co-operatively as a team player, able to inspire other professionals within the organization to work toward a shared vision and shared organizational goals.

Griffiths's basic premise is akin to the "transactional vs. transformational" leadership concept of Burns (in Coleman, 1982). Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins (1992) speak of visionary leadership in a collaborative school culture. Also commenting on what ought to obtain in future, Watson et al. share the Burns concept of transactional vs. transformational leadership. They look at how the superintendent of the future will respond to pressures to retreat or return to the past to find solutions for the problems of the future:

> The most effective [superintendent] will be characterized by what is termed transformational leadership, in contrast to transactional leadership, which is managerial and custodial. Transformational leaders are visionaries, and as such have ability to create images of the future and explore alternate paradigms for future action. To do this the superintendent must learn to delegate, to avoid being buried in the day-to-day routine at the cost of long-range planning. The most successful visionaries have the capacity to scan, the ability to review and pick out critical features from the information mass. The superintendent must also observe beyond the school system to see what is changing, and why. (Watson et al., 1989, p. 162)

Presenting a somewhat contrary view, Writ (1990), perhaps with a touch of realism, considering the present demands on the office, states that "the superintendent ends up unconnected to curriculum and instruction. . . . Success in the office consists not of being an instructional leader, but of developing interpersonal skills for working

out exchanges among all levels in order to maximize non-monetary benefits" (p. 65). He sees a new political-professional role emerging for the education superintendent.

The Williams Commission envisioned a new emphasis in the role of superintendents in the statement: "The role of the superintendent is also changing. . . . A role in instruction is re-emerging as a central function of the office of the superintendent" (Williams, 1992a, p. 263).

It was considered important to determine to what extent Wirt's view of the superintendent's emerging role as a political-professional could be harmonized with Williams's view of a re-emerging role as instructional leader; and just what the future role of the superintendent was most likely to be.

### *The Newfoundland Superintendency*

As mentioned in Chapter One, no major research specifically on the role of the superintendent in Newfoundland has been conducted since 1969. However, there are other areas of literature which deal with the legislation and other forces which have helped to shape that role, and some research which is closely related. This section reviews the literature on the Newfoundland superintendency in three sub-headings: (a) government documents, (b) reports of royal commissions, and (c) related research.

***Government documents.*** Authority for the position of Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland is found in the 1969 Schools Act. The Act is permissive in the sense that boards are not required to employ a superintendent, although at present all have done so. The Act is silent on the superintendent's role as "chief executive officer," leaving that to the discretion of the individual boards. Also at the discretion of the individual boards, duties in addition to those specifically mandated by the Act may be assigned. However, the nature of the duties assigned by the Schools Act would suggest that superintendents should function in the capacity of chief executive officer. A review of board by-laws has indicated that in at least some of the boards of the province, superintendents have been officially designated as chief executive officer (Watson et al., 1989, pp. 149, 150), while in the remaining boards, even though not specifically designated, that has become the universally accepted practice. Watson et al. summarize as follows:

> Newfoundland establishes in its Schools Act authority for the position of superintendent, specifies general selection criteria, lists seventeen duties and guidelines, and specifies that appointment and dismissal are subject to Ministerial approval. The position requires a Master's Degree in Education, and five years educational experience, two of which must be in administration. There is no mention of the chief education [sic] officer status of superintendent. (p. 156)

As mentioned in Chapter One, the Education Act (1968) eliminated superintendents at the Department level, and the Schools Act (1969) re-introduced them as a new genre of school board employees. In this context, the legal mandate of the superintendent as enunciated in the Schools Act constitutes the most basic "role description" for the office, a role description to which other duties may be added by boards, and which may be modified by social pressure, public expectations, and the leadership styles of the incumbents.

The 1969 Schools Act was revised in 1970, and ammendments over the following 20 years were consolidated in the 1990 re-printing. Thus, the seventeen components of the responsibility of the "new breed" of superintendents as enunciated in Section 19 of the 1969 Schools Act comprise a basic role description for superintendents. In addition the changes which occurred in subsequent revisions suggest changes in that role over the years. The seventeen components of the superintendent's responsibility as they were articulated in 1990, are included in their entirety in Chapter Four, and the changes reflected in the 1970 revision and in the 1990 consolidation are discussed in Chapter Five.

***Royal commission reports***. The report of the Warren Royal Commission which led up to the restructuring of 1969, and the report of the Williams Royal Commission which it is anticipated will result in significant further re-structuring within the next few years, are discussed in Chapter One, and do not require further detailing here. Respectively, they conveniently mark the beginning and ending of the time period which is the focus of the present study. Of the latter it should be said that depending upon the degree of implementation of the estimated 20% of its 211 recommendations which have to do with governance, the framework within which future Newfoundland superintendents will find themselves working will be radically altered -- specifically there will likely be fewer but much larger boards, and the involvement of the churches will be markedly

reduced or possibly eliminated. And again depending upon the degree of implementation of the estimated 80% of the Commission's 211 recommendations which have to do with programming, the work of Newfoundland superintendents as instructional leaders (if they will be able to find time for this role) will also be changed.

In an attempt to focus its restructuring efforts, on November 25, 1993, the Department of Education released a new document entitled *Adjusting the Course: Restructuring the School System for Educational Excellence*. In this document were presented government plans for a new system of school governance based on principles of efficiency, less church involvement, and greater parent involvement, as "a basis for higher (performance) expectations, standards and achievement" (p. 3) on the part of students. It was planned that within the province there would operate only eight to ten larger uni-denominational school boards whose functions would become more or less managerial as "greater program responsibilities would be devolved to schools" (p. 6). Superintendents would cease to exist as "each board would have a chief executive officer to be called the Director of Education," and "Assistant Directors responsible for personnel, programs, and finance and administration" (p. 7). "Included in the Director's job description would be specific responsibilities to the Department of Education, including accountability for student performance" (p. 7).

*Adjusting the Course Part II: Improving the Conditions for Learning* followed in February 1994. In this document, the Provincial Government outlined its vision for changes in programming. The statement: "higher levels of educational achievement have become ever more important in the face of changing economic and social conditions" (p. 1) suggests the impetus behind proposed changes. And the absence of any instructional leadership role for school boards or superintendent/directors is suggested by their non-inclusion in the following visionary quotation:

> Student efforts must be reinforced by teachers and parents. Schools must provide the necessary facilities, staff capabilities, and structures for learning. Government must establish the expectations and standards, see that these are met, develop the curriculum, and provide the resources. Finally, the public at large, including business, service agencies, and individuals, must promote and reinforce the goals wherever possible. (p. 3)

Although the new superintendent/directors are to be held accountable for student performance, they are to be squeezed "in the middle." "Roles judged to be best performed through legislation or activities at the provincial level are assigned to that level, while more direct responsibility for teaching and learning is assigned to the school" (p. 7). In the entire document, the only hint that the role of the new directors might be more than managerial is that they presumably would be involved in the appointment of specialists:

> Program specialists for primary, elementary, and secondary education, along with a specialist in school improvement and accountability will be appointed at the district level. The main function of these specialists will be to work directly with schools on program improvement, community involvement, and accountability. (p. 22)

If in the future, government's stated intentions are implemented as they are outlined, it appears certain that the role of the superintendent will undergo a major change at that time. This factor re-emphasizes the timeliness of the current study in providing a benchmark for future changes. But exactly what the new realities will be is still future, and beyond the focus of the present study.

***Previous research related to the Newfoundland superintendency***. The first available research on the Newfoundland superintendency was conducted by Snelgrove (1965), who studied the role of the supervising inspector in Newfoundland. This was at a time when those who were called superintendent worked in the Department of Education; and those who were closer to the schools, mandated to reside in their districts, and directly responsible for the supervision of instruction were known as "supervising inspectors." The work of the supervising inspectors was more like that of the present assistant superintendent or superintendent than was the work of the superintendent of the time, and consequently a study of their role at that time provides a pre-1969 background for the present study.

In his thesis *Role Pressures, Personality Characteristics, and Extent of Job Satisfaction of the District Superintendent in Newfoundland* King (1972) documented some of the external and internal factors affecting the superintendent's performance. Adding the area of superintendent-school board relations to the conceptual framework developed earlier by Griffiths (1966, pp. 68-80), he studied the work of the superintend-

ent under five task areas: (1) superintendent-school board relations, (2) improving educational opportunity, (3) obtaining and developing personnel, (4) providing and maintaining funds and facilities, and (5) maintaining effective community relations. Although in its main thrust this research was a relational study as its title suggests, a significant component was a 114 item questionnaire on the role of the superintendent completed by superintendents, board chairmen, business managers and a sample of board members and principals. Thus this study, occurring within three years after the 1969 Schools Act specified the duties of the new generation of superintendents, contains the earliest and possibly only existing data on the role of the superintendent as a school board employee in Newfoundland. Although it was not the primary intent of the 1972 King study to provide a "typical" role description for the Newfoundland superintendent, the findings are useful in providing comparisons with data gathered in the present study.

Parsons (1982) led his university class in a study of the role of the Assistant Superintendent in Newfoundland. One of the student participants in that study, C. Gerald Lane, further researched the role of Assistant Superintendent for his Masters' Thesis. Parsons noted: "The sets of activities most often identified by the assistant superintendents interviewed were (1) evaluation of teachers, (2) staffing, (3) improvement of instruction, and, (4) promotion of growth and leadership among professional staff" (p. ii).

Lane (1983) stated that it was in 1899 that the phrase "assistant superintendent" first entered the schools acts of Newfoundland. The Schools Act (1969) provided for school boards to appoint assistant superintendents, but "there were few appointments made to this position until September 1980. These appointments occurred as a result of a task force report on education, issued in April, 1979" (p. 4). Lane concluded that assistant superintendents work mainly in the area of curriculum and instruction, but depending on school board size, individual appointments vary in the amounts of responsibility for personnel administration, pupil services, and school-community relations. Business administration is responsibility of assistant superintendents only in very large boards (pp. 165-167). Lane's role description of assistant superintendents forms an interesting contrast with the role of the superintendent, but even more significant are the changes in the latter which resulted from the introduction of the former.

Since 1970 - 72 no role study of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland has been conducted, and in the wake of the recent Williams' Royal Commission Report, further massive change appears to be imminent. Therefore, it is important to document the nature and extent of change in the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland over the past quarter century, approximately the time between the implementation of the two Royal Commissions on Education.

### *Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework for this study is derived from classical role and organizational theory. Mintzberg (1973) identified ten managerial roles which he proposed formed a "gestalt -- an integrated whole" (p. 96). Mintzberg's ten observable roles were: "*figurehead, liaison,* and *leader* (inter-personal roles), *monitor, disseminator,* and *spokesman* (informational roles), and *entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator,* and *negotiator* (decisional roles)" (p. 96). These categories provide an organizational framework for studying the varied tasks of superintendents. Viewing organizations from a rather "mechanistic" perspective, Katz and Kahn (1978) said: "Roles are found in their purest form when they are completely divorced from the personalities of role incumbents and from any motivational tie that could encumber the role relationship" (p. 45). Their meaning was that role definition was a function of position rather than personality, that in its purest sense role would always be the same regardless of the skills or other personal characteristics of the incumbent.

From a continued "mechanistic" perspective, Mitchell (1978) said:

> Within most social settings, including the work environment, there are some fairly well-known rules about how people should behave in general (norms) and specifically how people in particular positions should behave (roles). . . . The expected behaviors for a particular position can be defined as one's role. (pp. 44, 230)

Mitchell spoke of titles assigned to persons joining organizations. He said that such titles designated a position within the organization, and further that a position carried certain responsibilities and behavior expectations which in actuality constituted a "role." In this context, he agreed with Katz and Kahn when he further said: "The term *role* is used to reflect the fact that all persons (regardless of their unique personal

characteristics) are supposed to behave a certain way if they occupy this specific position. The role, therefore is impersonal" (p. 53).

The narrower more mechanistic views of classical theory as seen in Mitchell's restrictive definition, although useful for study of the concept of role, are not generally used in their purest form by other more recent theorists. For example, Hoy and Miskel (1987) stated:

> It is possible, at a conceptual level, to describe and to predict behavior in a social system solely in terms of positions, roles, and expectations. . . For a more complete understanding of behavior in social systems, it is necessary to know about the personalities that occupy the roles, offices, and statuses within the system. What are the underlying need structures that motivate behavior? [i.e.] . . . the psychological bases of behavior in the social system. (p. 61)

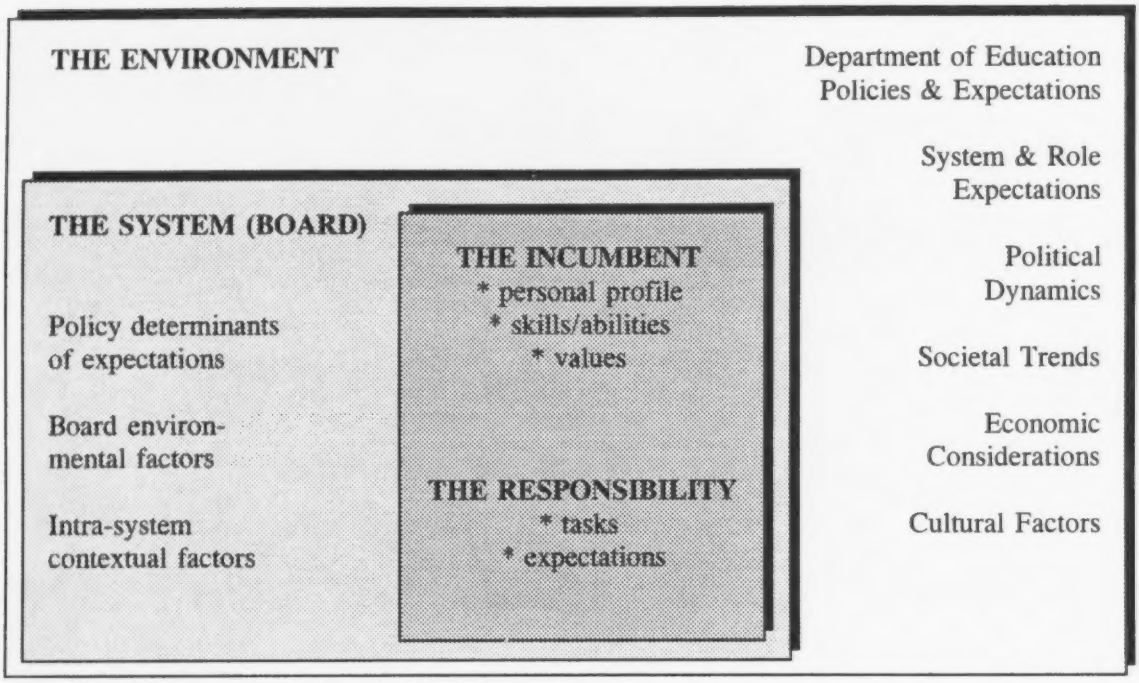
Because "role" is difficult if not impossible to observe independently of the occupant of that role, factors within the incumbent actually influence the observed role and should be included in a role study. In his role study of Alberta school superintendents, Green (1988) developed a "role framework" consisting primarily of skills, personal characteristics, and tasks. His "skills" and "personal characteristics" clearly appertain to the incumbent, and must be viewed as highly personal in nature. However, the "tasks" are in reality the expectations attached to the superintendent's position. Nonetheless, the nuclear idea remains the same, as in the definitions of Mintzberg and of Mitchell.

A common idea among most theorists whether articulated or implied is that roles exist within a social structure (organization). Katz, Kahn, and Adams (1980) conceptualize the relationship between "role" and "organization" as follows: "Organizations are comprised of [sic] subsystems which consist of articulated roles performed by persons. Societies, organizations, subsystems, and roles . . . *may be conceived in a hierarchy of nested systems* -- roles within subsystems, within organizations, within societies" (p. 75). The notion of one element nested within another constitutes the basis of the conceptual framework for this study (see Figure 1):

Figure 1

## GENERAL CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### The Role of the Superintendent




The diagram illustrates that the role of the superintendent is "nested" within the system (the school board) which in turn is "nested" within the broader environment. Intra-personal factors and expectations of the incumbent, as well as a host of other expectations and factors at the board level, and the broader environment (including the Department of Education and community) all to some degree determine what superintendents actually do in their positions. Besides multi-level expectations, the skills, abilities, and values of incumbents affect what is done (role behavior).

The five forces currently influencing education in Newfoundland as identified by Williams (1992b) are encompassed within the environmental factors in the general framework. Williams' list included specifically: demand for higher standards, changing economic conditions, changing social conditions, changing population dynamics, and changing technology.

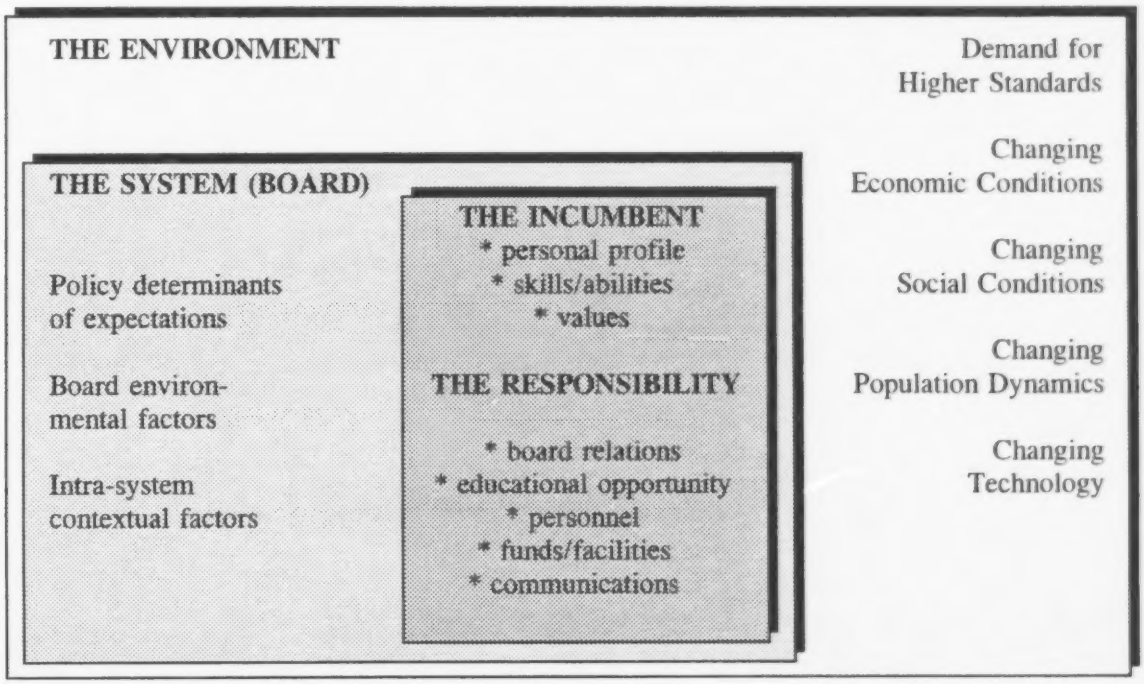
In addition, King's (1972) breakdown of the role of the Superintendent into five task areas for study (as discussed previously), constitutes a logical extension of the "task" portion of the superintendent's responsibility as seen in the general framework.

Beginning with the general conceptual framework (Figure 1) and incorporating Williams' and King's ideas, the following specific conceptual framework has been developed (Figure 2):

**Figure 2**

**SPECIFIC CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

**The Role of the Superintendent**




In summary, role is seen as a fluid concept -- constantly changing and being changed by forces both internal and external to the incumbent. An organization may have expectations and a job description, but through negotiation and performance a new incumbent may re-define the role. Changes within the incumbent, and changes in the system and the environment will combine to keep on re-defining role. Consequently any role description is simply a still frame in a moving picture.

The conceptual framework has to a degree determined the design of the study which is the subject of Chapter Three which follows. Chapters Four through Six report the study findings: Chapter Four being a description of the present role of the Newfoundland Superintendent of Education; Chapter Five, a description of changes in that role over the last quarter century; and Chapter Six, a discussion of the forces which have influenced that role to produce changes. Chapter Seven contains a summary, and the conclusions and implications of the study.

## Chapter Three

# Design of the Study

This research was designed to be primarily a descriptive study, using a questionnaire survey and interviews. Regarding the nature of descriptive research, Gay (1987) stated: "Descriptive research involves collecting data in order to . . . answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of study. A descriptive study determines and reports the way things are" (p. 10). In part, the study was designed to describe the present role of the Newfoundland superintendent, and may therefore be accurately characterized as descriptive.

However in addition, the study was designed to describe the present role of the Newfoundland superintendent in the context of historical factors which have combined to shape it. Therefore in that sense, it might be considered historical research. Regarding the nature of historical research, Gay (1987) continued: "The purpose of historical research is to arrive at conclusions concerning causes, effects, or trends of past occurrences that may help to explain present events and anticipate future events" (p. 18). Gay further stated that "a historical research study in education may also involve interviews with persons who participated in the event or process under investigation, if it occurred in the recent past (1987, p. 182). Since a major portion of the purpose and methods of this study are accurately reflected in these statements by Gay, the study must also be considered historical -- hence a **descriptive-historical** study.

This research project was designed to study the evolution of the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland between 1969 and 1994, from the perspective of those who actually occupy and/or have occupied the office, and to provide an up-to-date description of that role as it currently exists.

### *Data Sources*

The research population for the study was defined as those individuals who were serving or had served as school board superintendents in the Province of Newfoundland between 15 May 1992 and the time of data collection in the autumn of 1993. The

beginning date was arbitrarily chosen to coincide with the publication of the Williams' Royal Commission Report, and because it allowed the inclusion of the last three superintendents of the original 1969 cohort, two of whom had retired by the autumn of 1993 -- superintendents whose experience spanned the entire time period under study.

A careful review of available copies of the annual *Department of Education Directory* provided a comprehensive list of the names of the 93 individuals who had functioned in the office of the Superintendent of Education in the Province since 1969. This list did not include program co-ordinators who on a number of occasions served as CEO's of boards, nor did it include individuals who served as "acting superintendent" but were never actually designated "superintendent." The list did include thirteen individuals who had served more than fifteen years since 1969, and five who have had experience in more than one school board. The list included one individual who had served for five years as the program co-ordinator of a board which during that time period was too small to qualify for a superintendent. Once the board's student enrolment had increased to the level that entitled it to a superintendent, he simply carried right on, serving in that capacity for an additional nineteen years.

In the autumn of 1993, 26 of the 27 boards operating in Newfoundland employed a superintendent while the remaining one employed a program co-ordinator. These superintendents' average (mathematical mean) tenure in the position was 8.88 years. By adding to this group the four retirees included in the population definition, the research population became 30 individuals with an average tenure of 8.91 years.

### *Data Collection*

The research design incorporated two concurrent components of data collection: a questionnaire, and semi-structured in-depth interviews. A summary of the intended relationship between questionnaire and interview to provide answers to each of the study's sub-questions is presented in table 3-1.

Table 3-1

**Relationship Between Sub-questions and Research Instruments**

| Research sub-question | Questionnaire | Interview |
|---|---|---|
| 1. What are the present **role expectations** associated with the office of "superintendent of education" in Newfoundland? | major | minor |
| 2. What are the perceptions of Newfoundland superintendents regarding the **nature of changes in their role** since 1969? | minor | major |
| 3. What are the perceptions of Newfoundland superintendents regarding the **causes of changes in their role** since 1969? | | major |

***The Instruments***

Although the two instruments were employed to answer most of the same questions, each of them was prepared and processed separately, and each requires separate comment.

***Questionnaire survey.*** **A secondary data collection instrument** was the 114-item "role of the superintendent" questionnaire developed by King (1972). The King questionnaire was re-produced in its entirety (including directions to respondents) and supplemented with an additional page to provide demographic details regarding respondents and a place for optional write-in of job components which respondents felt had been overlooked in the original questionnaire or might not have been a part of the superintendent's role in the early 1970s.

The questionnaire provided quantitative data describing the present role of the superintendent. By comparison of present results with earlier superintendents' response patterns just after the 1969 Schools Act, the questionnaire provided corroboration of the interview results regarding the nature of change in the superintendents' role. The questionnaire, including the cover letter under which it was distributed has been reproduced in its entirety in Appendix A.

The entire research population of 30 individuals was requested to complete the questionnaire. These were distributed to incumbents at a meeting of superintendents in St. John's in September of 1993, and to retirees by mail a few days later. Each questionnaire was identified by a pencilled ID number which was removed later in the study. Once initial returns were in, the ID numbers facilitated identification of non-respondents; and a total of four personal letters, and five telephone calls resulted in a 100% return!

***Semi-structured interview***. The **primary data collection instrument** of the study was the semi-structured in-depth interview. As was anticipated, these interviews provided extensive qualitative data regarding changes in the superintendent's role, and perceived causes of those changes. In addition, since a questionnaire developed in the early 1970s was less than totally comprehensive based on to-day's reality, the interviews enlarged and extended the description of the superintendent's present roles provided by the King questionnaire. The interview schedule was modified slightly during the Pilot Study and the Revised Interview Schedule has been reproduced in Appendix C.

Fourteen in-depth interviews were conducted among superintendents representing a simple majority sample of school boards, stratified on the basis of: (a) board size, (b) religious denomination, and (c) geographic region. It had been the original intention that the interview sample be stratified on the basis of one additional characteristic -- rural/urban characterization. However, the rural/urban characterization proved to be problematic because the majority of boards in the province included a mixture of both rural and urban schools. It was observed that generally the larger the board, the higher the per centage of its schools which tended to be urban. Further, even in many urban schools, students from neighbouring rural communities commuted daily to attend, and it was determined that even if arbitrary definitions could be developed to consistently differentiate between a rural and an urban board, the categories would approximately parallel those when the boards were stratified by size.

Because three of the five individuals selected for interview in the Pilot Study were incumbent superintendents, and because the data obtained in the Pilot Study proved to be rich and meaningful, the stratified population sample was constructed to include them. These three interviews comprise a part of the study findings. Beyond the constraints

imposed by inclusion of three individuals from the pilot study and by the stratification criteria, where a choice still existed, the individual having the longer tenure was selected for the interview sample, resulting in an average tenure of 12.93 years among interviewees.

Except for the three individuals included from the Pilot Study, the interviews were conducted in the autumn of 1993, with the final interview occurring in January of 1994. Of the fourteen superintendents selected via this stratification process, when requested to do so, all were willing to participate in the research, resulting in 100% co-operation.

***Construction of Stratified Sample of Superintendents***

The three-way stratified sample of school boards was constructed in such a manner that for each characteristic considered, the proportion of individuals of each type in both the total population and the sample population was as close to identical as possible. An analysis of the stratification of the sample population according to each of the three chosen characteristics follows:

***Stratification by School Board Size***. For purposes of this stratification type, based on statistics for the 1992 - 93 school year, boards were classified as (a) **small** if they served fewer than 2500 students, (b) **medium** if they served 2500 to 4499 students, and (c) **large** if they served 4500 or more students. The following table shows how the sample population compared with the total population on the basis of school board size:

**Table 3-2**

**Boards Classified by Number of Students**

| Classification | Total Population | | Sample Population | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Boards | Per cent of Total | Number of Boards | Per cent of Sample |
| Small | 8 | 29.6% | 4 | 28.6% |
| Medium | 10 | 37.1% | 5 | 35.7% |
| Large | 9 | 33.3% | 5 | 35.7% |
| Totals | 27 | 100.0% | 14 | 100.0% |

***Stratification by Geographic Region***. For purposes of this stratification type, boards were characterized as (a) **western**, (b) **central**, (c) **eastern**, (d) **Labradorian**, and (e) **province wide**. The higher percentage in the sample from the eastern regions than from the western region was justified on the basis that the eastern boards tend to be much larger, and also on the basis that the heavier than average representation from Labrador is actually representation from the far western part of the province. The following table shows how the sample population compared with the total population on the basis of the board's geographic region:

**Table 3-3**

**Boards Classified by Geographic Region**

| Classification | Total Population | | Sample Population | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Boards | Per cent of Total | Number of Boards | Per cent of Sample |
| Western | 7 | 25.9% | 3 | 21.4% |
| Central | 8 | 29.7% | 4 | 28.6% |
| Eastern | 7 | 25.9% | 4 | 28.6% |
| Labradorian | 3 | 11.1% | 2 | 14.3% |
| Province-wide | 2 | 7.4% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Totals | 27 | 100.0% | 14 | 100.0% |

***Stratification by Religious Denomination***. For purposes of this stratification type, boards were classified along denominational lines, characterized as (a) Integrated, (b) Roman Catholic, and (c) Others (including the Pentecostal and Seventh-day Adventist Boards). The following table shows how the sample population compared with the total population when stratified on the basis of Religious Denomination:

Table 3-4

**Boards Classified by Religious Denomination**

| Classification | Total Population | | Sample Population | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Boards | Per cent of Total | Number of Boards | Per cent of Sample |
| Integrated | 16 | 59.3% | 8 | 57.1% |
| Roman Catholic | 9 | 33.3% | 5 | 35.7% |
| Other | 2 | 7.4% | 1 | 7.2% |
| Totals | 27 | 100.0% | 14 | 100.0% |

At the time each interview was requested, the prospective interviewee was informed that the interview would be focused primarily on two areas: their perceptions of the nature of changes in the role of the superintendent since 1969, and their perception of the causes of those changes. Interviews ranged from 45-minutes to one-hour-and-45-minutes, averaging just over one hour in duration. They took place during January, June, September to December of 1993, and January of 1994; spaced throughout those months so that only once did two iinterviews occur on consecutive days. Usually they were separated by a week or more. Audio tape transcriptions were completed on an on-going basis throughout the interview process.

At the outset of each interview, interviewees were encouraged to take the lead in responding to each item in their own way. This tended to make data analysis more difficult, but rendered a richness which a more formally structured interview might not provide. AAt the beginning of each of the last nine interviews, a copy of the Revised Interview Schedule was given to each interviewee as an advanced organizer, but the respondents were encouraged to focus on the broader questions (numbers three and five) before moving on the more specific questions (numbers four and six) which reflect the conceptual framework of the study. Ample opportunity was given for each superintendent to pursue ideas as they occurred to them. For example, one superintendent came prepared with several pages of notes which he had made in response to the two focal

issues mentioned at the time of making the interview appointment. He was given complete freedom to address the issues as he saw them, and surprisingly in his own way he covered most of the issues which the interview schedule was designed to cover. When we finally turned to the interview schedule, it was necessary to address only those details which were not sufficiently developed and needed further clarification, and one or two other items which he hadn't included in his summary. This outstanding co-operation on the part of a particular superintendent was an excellent indicator of the general interest which was shown by all respondents throughout the study. Many made their points forcefully and with genuine emotion. All participated fully in answering questions and raising issues.

### *Data Analysis and Reporting*

As indicated earlier, data were gathered by means of two instruments -- questionnaire and semi-structured interview. Although data from each instrument were processed differently, the results have been integrated in the reporting, as indicated in Table 3-1. The following two sub-sections deal with data analysis and reporting for (a) questionnaire, and (b) interview.

#### *Questionnaire Analysis/Reporting*

The total study population of 30 individuals provided a 100% return. The number of individuals in King's 1971 study population was 27, of which 23 responded. Since King's data were already aggregated, the questionnaire results were used only in a descriptive manner relative to the present role, and in a comparative manner relative to changes over time.

Questionnaire results were tabulated and reduced to mathematical means for each item and for each response sub-group in exactly the same manner used by King (1972, p. 157). In a few instances, an item response was missed or obscured. These were not included in the mathematical means. On the questionnaire there were five response categories, and each assigned was a numerical value from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

The data were organized into five tables, one for each of the major sections of the questionnaire. These tables comprise Appendix B. They are commented on in the two chapters which follow. Chapter Four comprises a current role description for Newfoundland Superintendents of Education. The importance of questionnaire items as role components and/or descriptors was classified according to mean scores which fell into the following consequent groupings:

**Table 3-5**

**Classification of Responses by Range of Means**

| Range of Means | Response Classification |
|---|---|
| 4.50 - 5.00 | Vital role component/descriptor |
| 3.50 - 4.49 | Probable role component/descriptor |
| 2.50 - 3.49 | Possible role component/descriptor |
| 1.50 - 2.49 | Improbable role component/descriptor |
| 1.00 - 1.49 | Role non-component/descriptor |

Because the questionnaire used was an exact copy of the King Questionnaire administered in 1972, a comparison of responses between 1972 and 1993 was possible, and a valid means of comparing changes over time. On an item by item basis, the mathematical mean scores of 1972 were compared with those of 1993. Where a mathematical mean change of 0.5 or greater was noted, or where a change of greater than half the remaining distance to the end of the rating scale was noted, these items were considered "noteworthy." In cases where the mathematical mean change was 0.8 or greater, these were reported on as "major changes." The tables in Appendix B provide the comparative data between 1971 and 1993. In addition, the tables provide comparative data on an item by item basis broken down by "board size," by "geographic region," and by "religious denomination." (However, since there was only one questionnaire respondent in the "other" religious denomination category, ethical considerations precluded the inclusion of those responses, although they were included

in the "board size" and "geographic region" break-downs). These comparative date were occasionally useful in suggesting reasons for changes. The changes indicated by these means comparisons were reported in Chapter Five.

The questionnaires provided two additional types of information: (a) in the "questionnaire supplement" (last page of questionnaire), seven respondents added items which they felt had not been included in the questionnaire; and (b) in the questionnaire itself, eleven respondents wrote unsolicited comments relating to one or more of the questionnaire items -- comments intended to clarify their responses. In some instances, these write-in comments were of such a nature that the original intent of the question was altered, and consequently the response to the question could not be included in the calculation of the mathematical means; but the comment(s) themselves, in concert with others similar by other respondents, constituted valuable insights into the perceptions of superintendents regarding both the nature of their role, and the nature of changes in that role over time. These perceptions have been summarized in the appropriate sub-sections in Chapters Four and Five respectively.

***Interview Analysis/Reporting***

With the consent of interviewees, all interviews were audio taped. From the audio tapes, interview transcripts were prepared, using a dicta-phone and a computer equipped with Word Perfect 5.1. Electronic files of the fourteen interviews averaged 60.5K each, for a total of 847K of data.

Content analysis was an on-going part of the study as it progressed from interview to interview. Thus it was possible that what was gained from one interview could become the subject of probing questions in interviews that followed, or be further examined and/or clarified by the responses of subsequent interviews. Using a "snowballing technique" as far as practical, emerging issues, common themes, and tentative conclusions became subjects for further clarification in subsequent interviews.

This technique provided for a richness of data otherwise unattainable, but it limited the reliability of any attempt to attach some statistical measure to the importance of a particular response by the frequency with which it was given. In other words, because some questions emerged part way through the interview process, and also

because that in the semi-structured nature of the interview, respondents were allowed to develop ideas in their own manner in response to general questions, not all interviewees were asked exactly the same questions; therefore the fact that a particular respondent was silent on a particular issue could not be construed to mean that it was consequently not an important issue in his perception. At most it might indicate that there were issues of greater significance within the area being examined.

Berg (1989) and Glesne and Peshkin (1992) discuss the development of grounded theory by use of themes and categories which logically emerge from the story contained in an interview. Beginning with the topics and sub-topics of the Revised Interview Schedule (Appendix C), a tentative framework was constructed for data organization. This framework was altered and revised continuously as the process of content analysis progressed -- finally becoming the second part of the outline of Chapter Four, and the full outline of Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

The process of content analysis was computer assisted. Using Word Perfect 5.1, the tentative framework was loaded into "document 1," and one at a time interview transcripts were loaded into "document 2." Each interview transcript was studied systematically, and, giving careful consideration to context, was broken into segments of five different types: (a) commentary on a single interview topic, (b) commentary involving two or more interview topics, (c) commentary unrelated to the research problem, (b) personal background of interviewee, and (e) questions/comments of the interviewer.

Of the interviewee comments which were related to the research topic, each was assigned a topical heading from the tentative framework. If no appropriate heading existed in the framework up to that point, one was altered, or a new one created. The comment was then "blocked" and "copied" under the appropriate heading in "document 1," with the addition of a simple source identification. Those involving two or more interview topics were "blocked" and "copied" under each appropriate heading, with the addition of the comment "duplicate" following the source identification. It was found that at times a full page of commentary was all on a single topic, and at other times a short paragraph might contain a sentence or two on each of several topics. The personal background of the interviewee, and comments unrelated to the research topic were not

moved into the new topical compilation, nor were the interviewer's questions, unless they were deemed essential as contextual clues, in which case, if possible they were turned into statements and placed in parentheses as were other contextual clues. Otherwise they were placed in separate italicized paragraphs to be incorporated into the quotation preamble in the final document.

Thus a new document was created -- a document 562K in length. It comprised a final framework (an outline) with a transcript of all the different interview segments relating to each of the sub-topics emerging from the study. Section by section, it was double-checked to ascertain that each quotation had been reliably categorized. The reporting consisted of extracting common themes, including contrasting and differing ideas, and quoting particularly articulate responses, especially those which represented significant consensus among the group.

One of the greatest difficulties in the content analysis portion of the study stemmed from the fact that interviews were conducted in a semi-structured rather than a structured format. Superintendents were free in this venue to present ideas as they came to them, and from the perspective of whatever mentally constructed framework they may have had. The result was that at times it was not possible to determine from their comments whether they were talking specifically about the present role of the superintendent, about changes that had occurred in that role over time, or about causes of those changes. Their comments often ranged from past to present to future tense and back again, and what was viewed as a change by one individual, may have been viewed as a cause of change by another. As a consequence, although the original conceptual framework of this study was maintained in the final writing, it was found impossible to avoid all appearance of duplication among Chapters Four, Five, and Six. And in the last word, some quotations used in a particular chapter, are simply a part of a total picture in an individual interviewee's mind, and their placement in the written report of findings was to a degree arbitrary. For example, although the three quotations selected as representative perceptions of incumbents regarding the nature of present role of the superintendent in Newfoundland (see Chapter Four Summary) were selected because they were rather wide-ranging in scope, they do make reference to both changes and causes of changes.

Because the superintendents were given considerable freedom in the manner in which they responded during the interviews, it was determined that in order to avoid doing injustice to their intended meanings, considerable freedom must also be also given to the researcher in reporting the findings. As a result, much apparent overlap exists among Chapters Four, Five, and Six; and to the degree that the readability of the final document would allow, ideas were expressed in the actual words of the respondents. Where necessary for clarity in the reporting of such direct quotations, contextual clues, words or phrases implied by the respondent, and occasionally a few words from a question of the researcher were added in brackets [such as this example].

### *Pilot Study*

During the first six months of 1993, an interview schedule was prepared and piloted among five individuals chosen for their knowledge of the Newfoundland education scene and/or for their first-hand knowledge of the Newfoundland superintendency. Results obtained verified first that superintendents were willing to be interviewed (five interview requests resulted in five interviews, three of them with incumbent superintendents), and second that the quality and range of responses were excellent (interviewees were very willing to talk, their responses indicated intimate acquaintance with the issues under study, and they possessed the ability to articulate complex issues). In addition, an analysis of the transcripts helped to enhance the interview skills of the researcher.

The initially prepared interview schedule was revised during the pilot study to allow for a more naturally flowing interchange between interviewer and interviewee, and to correlate more exactly with the "Specific Conceptual Framework" (see Chapter Two). The changes were basically editorial, and not of a nature to disqualify the earlier responses elicited from the three superintendents included in the pilot study population from inclusion in the final study.

### *Study Reliability and Validity*

By definition, "reliability" is used to refer to consistency of results, the degree to which a study may be repeated: will repeated assessments of particular phenomena

produce similar results? Sandelowski (1986) stated that, "inherent in the [notion] reliability is repeatability" (p. 32).

Genge (1991) summed up the relationship between "reliability" and "validity" as follows: "Reliability requires consistency only, but validity requires both accuracy and consistency. Reliability is viewed as a necessary precondition for validity. Validity refers to how truthful, genuine, and authentic the data are in representing what they are intended to assess" (p. 66).

The inclusion in the study population of all individuals who at the time of the study were serving as Newfoundland superintendents provided a comprehensive data base for the questionnaire component of the study. The characteristic criteria used in stratification of the sample population for interview provided for the widest possible variety in perspectives and responses. Also, the bias toward longer-than-average tenure for respondents selected -- a mean of 12.93 years for the sample as compared to a mean of 8.91 years in the total population (see "Data Sources" sub-section above) -- increased the historical validity of the study findings.

The questionnaire used in this study was developed by King in the early 1970s. An initial draft of the King questionnaire, developed from a compilation of "pertinent administrative practices" contained in several role studies of the time, was validated by submission to a panel of six jurors for critique (see King, 1972, pp. 46-49). The use of a previously validated questionnaire facilitated direct comparison of data gathered early in the study time period with similar data gathered at its end. In addition, the pilot study was designed to validate the interview schedule, and verify the interview skills of the researcher himself.

The researcher was familiar with the subject of study -- close, but not too close. He was technically not a superintendent of education, because the Seventh-day Adventist School Board did not have the necessary 2000 minimum number of students required to allow for the appointment of one. However, as CEO of that Board, he met regularly with superintendents from across the province, and believed that he had developed a positive rapport with them. Because he was daily working with the issues which concerned superintendents, his perceptions of what they were trying to say, often enabled him to rephrase questions and clarify issues raised during interviews. As a relative

newcomer to Newfoundland (interviews were conducted during his third year of residence in the Province), he had a keen interest in the issues which were impacting education, but carried few historical pre-conceptions which might tend to bias the questions which he would ask. He was close enough to understand the issues, but distant enough to enable objectivity -- a necessary pre-requisite for internal validity. As was anticipated, his collegial relationship with the superintendents, along with the timeliness of the topic, appear to have been contributing factors to the achievement of a 100% response rate to both questionnaires, and interview requests.

Genge (1991, p. 67) included "mechanically recorded data" among strategies to achieve internal validity. Interviews were audio-taped. Besides providing an accurate record of what was said, this technique freed the researcher from the necessity of making notes to concentrate on the subject of the interview. Interviews were subsequently transcribed, and responses coded according to an outline developed from the specific conceptual framework -- a framework whose basic components were themselves validated by the entire process of the Williams Royal Commission.

### *Delimitations*

The research population for this study was delimited to those individuals in the Province of Newfoundland who were serving as school board superintendents in the autumn of 1993, or who had been serving as school board superintendents on 15 May 1992. The latter date was the date of publication of the Williams' Royal Commission Report. The last three superintendents of the original 1969 cohort were still in office on this date, but two of them had retired by the autumn of 1993.

### *Limitations*

The study was limited by the following factors:

1. The structure of the interview schedule, although not rigidly adhered to, was based on the conceptual framework of the study, and thus it may have focused the comments of respondents mainly on forces exterior to the superintendency to the possible exclusion of those originating within the superintendency. This factor may have pre-disposed the interviewees to overlook or minimize those factors

within themselves which may have influenced their role. However, since opportunity was always given to respond to a broadly-focused question prior to looking at the specifics of the conceptual framework, and since only the broadly-focused questions were presented at the time each interview appointment was made, this was not viewed as a serious limitation.

2. The quality and breadth of responses obtained in the interview process was very dependent upon the memory of the respondents, and also upon the questioning capability of the researcher himself. These two factors may have to some extent restricted or possibly distorted the information provided by the various respondents.

### *Ethical Considerations*

The study proposal was approved by the Department of Educational Administration Ethics Review Committee of the University of Alberta.

Questionnaire respondents were informed by cover letter, and interview respondents in person, that their participation in the study was voluntary, that all responses would remain completely confidential, and that they were at liberty refuse to answer specific questions or to discontinue interviews at any time they chose. In reporting the findings, quotations, demographic characteristics of respondents, and statistical extrapolations were to be used, but always in a manner calculated to protect the identity of their source.

An executive summary of the study results and conclusions was prepared for circulation to those respondents who so requested.

### *Chapter Summary*

This research was designed to be primarily a descriptive-historical study; using questionnaire survey, and interview. Its purpose was to provide a current role description of Superintendents of Education in Newfoundland, to identify changes in their role over a quarter century, and to identify causes of those changes, based upon the perceptions of incumbents.

Data collection was by means of repeating a previously validated questionnaire survey which had been administered to Newfoundland superintendents early in the quarter century, and by means of semi-structured interview among a stratified sample of current and recently-retired superintendents. A pilot study was conducted to confirm the interview skills of the researcher, and to determine that worthwhile data were available.

The description of the nature of the present role was drawn primarily from questionnaire responses, and secondarily from the Schools Act (consolidated 1990) and selected interview comments. Based upon the subject responses, questionnaire items were classified and reported as "vital," "probable," "possible," "improbable," or "non-" "role component/descriptors." Both solicited and unsolicited "write-ins" were used to round out the picture in a narrative style.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with a stratified sample of incumbent superintendents and recent retirees, representing a simple majority of the school boards currently operating in the Province. With the permission of the interviewees, all interviews were audio-taped, then subsequently transcribed. Using Word Perfect 5.1, content analysis was employed to group pertinent responses under the outline headings suggested by the conceptual framework. This outline was altered to accommodate the meanings and topics which the interviewees considered germane to the topic. Broad themes, and significant trends and variations from the group perceptions were reported in a narrative style, using as much as possible, the direct words of respondents.

The findings in Chapter Four have been drawn from questionnaire, and secondarily from interview responses, and constitute a present role description. Chapter Five was based on interview and secondarily questionnaire responses, and comprises a description of role changes. And, Chapter Six was drawn from interview data and consists of a discussion of causes of changes in the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland, all over the last quarter century (1969 - 1994).

## Chapter Four

# The Present Role of the Newfoundland Superintendent

This chapter presents the findings of the study regarding the nature of the present role of the Superintendent of Education in the Province of Newfoundland. It brings together the results of the re-administered King Questionnaire, supplemented by written-in comments, and pertinent interview responses, all set against the backdrop of the legal framework of the Schools Act (consolidated 1990).

### *The Legal Context*

A cursory role description of the Newfoundland Superintendent was presented in the Schools Act (1969) as "the duties of a superintendent." This is a part of the legal mandate under which superintendents function. This list of "duties" was modified by various ammendments during the years which followed, and the totality of changes is seen in the Schools Act (consolidated 1990). The entire list from Section 18 of the (Consolidated) Schools Act (1990) has been re-produced here, because it constitutes a suitable backdrop against which to present the findings of the current study regarding the present role of the superintendent.

***The Schools Act (consolidated 1990).***

The duties of a Superintendent shall be to

(a) attend meetings of the school board and the executive committee;

(b) advise and assist the school board in exercising its powers and duties under this Act;

(c) investigate a matter as required by the board and, after investigation, report in writing to it on the matter;

(d) Recruit and recommend for appointment professional staff and, subject to the approval of the board, assign them to their respective positions;

(e) subject to the approval of the school board, determine which school a pupil shall attend;

(f) recommend the promotion, transfer and, subject to this Act, the termination of employment of professional employees of the school board;

(g) develop and implement a program of supervision and in-service training;

(h) exercise general supervision over all schools, property, teachers and other employees of the school board and, to that end, ensure that each school is visited as frequently as feasible and at least twice in each school year;

(i) in conjunction with the school principals, articulate the programs in the elementary and secondary school grades and develop policies for promoting pupils from one school level to another;

(j) provide leadership in evaluating and improving the educational program in the district;

(k) provide professional advice to the school board on planning new buildings, extensions and renovations;

(l) assist the school board in preparing its annual budget;

(m) act as a means of communication between the school board and staff, both professional and non-professional, and other employees of the school board;

(n) subject to the approval of the school board, attend institutes as required by the minister;

(o) make known to the public the policies of the school board and enlist support of the public for the school board's program;

(p) make, on forms prescribed by the minister, annual reports to the school board and to the department on the educational program in the school board's district and provide copies of such reports to the appropriate education council; and

(q) perform those other duties that may be assigned to him or her by the school board, where these duties are consistent with this Act.

(The Schools Act, consolidated 1990, Section 18)

The duties and powers assigned to superintendents under this Act are wide-ranging in scope. The individual "duties" vary in nature from quite narrow (e.g.: "attend meetings of the school board and the executive committee") to very broad (e.g.: "perform those other duties that may be assigned to him or her by the school board").

***Comparison of Schools Act (consolidated 1990) and conceptual framework***. The correlation between the duties defined in the Schools Act (consolidated 1990) and the conceptual framework of this study is striking, as the following break-down illustrates:

*Superintendent - School Board Relations* in the conceptual framework would include: (a) attend meetings of the school board and the executive committee; (b) advise and assist the school board in exercising its powers and duties under this Act; (c) investigate any matter as required by the board and, after investigation, report in writing to it on the matter; (q) perform those other duties that may be assigned to him or her by the school board, where those duties are consistent with this Act; and if government relations are viewed as a sub-set of the superintendent - school board relation; (n) subject to the approval of the school board, attend institutes as required by the minister; and (p) make, on forms prescribed by the minister, annual reports to the school board and to the department on the educational program in the school board's district and provide copies of those reports to the appropriate educational council.

*Improving Educational Opportunity* would include: (e) subject to the approval of the school board, determine which school a pupil shall attend; (i) in conjunction with the school principals, articulate the programs in the elementary and secondary school grades and develop policies for promoting pupils from one school level to another; and (j) provide leadership in evaluating and improving the educational program in the district.

*Obtaining and Developing Personnel* would include: (d) recruit and recommend for appointment professional staff and, subject to the approval of the board, assign them to their respective positions; (f) recommend the promotion, transfer and, subject to this Act, the termination of employment of professional employees of the school board; (g) develop and implement a program of supervision and in-service training; part of (h) exercise general supervision over all . . . teachers and other employees of the school board and, to that end, ensure that each school is visited as frequently as feasible and at least twice in each school year; and (m) act as a means of communication between the school board and staff, both professional and non-professional, and other employees of the school board.

*Providing and Maintaining Funds and Facilities* would include: part of (h) exercise general supervision over all schools, property . . . and, to that end, ensure that each school is visited as frequently as feasible and at least twice in each school year; (k) provide professional advice to the school board on planning new buildings, extensions and renovations; and (l) assist the school board in preparing its annual budget;

*Maintaining Effective Community Relations* would include (o) make known to the public the policies of the school board and enlist support of the public for the school board's program.

Thus all "duties" assigned by the Act are included within the scope of the conceptual framework of this study, and all sections of the conceptual framework are represented by duties assigned by the Act.

### *The King Questionnaire Results*

In this section, following the outline of this study's specific conceptual framework and the questionnaire itself, the five areas of "responsibility" are presented in sequence, characterizing each role component/descriptor as "vital," "probable," "possible," "improbable," or a "non-component," based on the calculation of mathematical mean scores of responses. Within each grouping responses were ranked or "prioritized" so that the item with the highest mathematical mean score was listed first, and others followed in descending order of means.

#### *Superintendent - School Board Relations*

It is interesting to note the very high mean scores of the first seven component/descriptors in the table 4-1 which follows. In fact, of the sixteen highest means earned in the 114-item questionnaire, thirteen are in the area of "superintendent-school board relations." The fact that eighteen of the 27 component/descriptors in this area of responsibility have been classified as "vital" to the role of the superintendent, and the fact that on several the mean scores represent near-unanimity indicate the major importance with which superintendents regard this area.

**Table 4 - 1**

**Prioritized Vital Role Components (School Board Relations)**

| Item | Vital Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Advise the Board on policy matters. | 4.97 |
| 6 | Carry the main responsibility of putting the Board's decisions into effect. | 4.97 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | Carry out duties assigned him by Board policies and regulations. | 4.93 |
| 1 | Carry out duties assigned him by the Education Act. | 4.90 |
| 3 | Advise and assist the School Board in exercising its powers and duties under the Education Act. | 4.90 |
| 12 | Develop with the Board and staff long range plans for the improvement of the school system. | 4.87 |
| 10 | Furnish the Board with the information and advice it needs to establish sound policies in educational matters and in school administration. | 4.83 |
| 20 | Identify himself with the Board and its policies. | 4.83 |
| 9 | Initiate discussions with the Board on any aspect of the operations of the school system where he believes changes should be made or policies should be established. | 4.80 |
| 22 | Investigate and report in writing on matters as required by the Board. | 4.77 |
| 8 | Prepare and draft policies and regulations for consideration and adoption by the Board. | 4.76 |
| 11 | Keep the Board informed through periodic reports, regarding the schools' objectives, needs, achievements, and plans for the future. | 4.70 |
| 18 | Carry out decisions of the School Board with which he may not personally agree. | 4.70 |
| 21 | Defend Board policies publicly even when he may personally disagree with them. | 4.63 |
| 4 | Attend all meetings of the Board and its committees, except where his own salary, tenure, or efficiency are under consideration. | 4.60 |
| 24 | Strive to develop a strong team spirit among School Board, principals, teaching staffs, parents, and administrative staff. | 4.60 |
| 7 | Establish an administrative council of senior officials to assist him in solving problems. | 4.52 |
| 13 | Be responsible for the preparation and development of the detailed budget and fiscal policies for Board consideration. | 4.50 |

Contrary to the generally strong agreement with item 21, one superintendent indicated that he "strongly disagreed" with "defending board policies publicly even when

he may personally disagree with them." He pencilled the word "resign" beside his response. And interestingly, his respondent profile indicated that he was among the superintendents with the most years of experience in the province.

Table 4-2 lists the "probable" role component/descriptors in the general area of superintendent-school board relations. Of the remaining nine items not classified as "vital," six have been classified as "probable," indicating that in the perception of most superintendents they are valid indicators -- duties and powers closely associated with the role of the superintendent.

**Table 4 - 2**

**Prioritized Probable Role Components (School Board Relations)**

| Item | Probable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 14 | Approve the budget statement **before** its presentation to the Board. | 4.40 |
| 17 | Act as the formally established and recognized means of communication between the Board and staff, both professional and non-professional. | 4.37 |
| 25 | Act on how own initiative and assume discretionary powers if he feels that such action in the best interests of the school system or of an individual child. | 4.17 |
| 16 | Be responsible for the development of master plans of all building facilities and renovations of school facilities. | 4.07 |
| 19 | Participate in professional negotiations as the representative of the School Board, negotiating with teacher representatives on behalf of the Board. | 3.82 |

The three component/descriptors listed in table 4-3 which follows represent areas in which there is little or no consensus among superintendents. It is possible that these represent responsibilities which are discharged differently in different boards, or it is possible that the items themselves are perceived differently by different superintendents. For example, in the case of item 26, which would require a superintendent to "assume full responsibility on all professional matters -- e.g., teacher selection and placement, in-service education -- without seeking prior approval of the Board;" responses ranged from

SA (strongly agree) to SD (strongly disagree); but in two instances written comment indicated that one who "agreed" and one who "strongly agreed" did so with the proviso that it be done "in accordance with Schools Act and (school board) by-laws," in the first case; and that provision for this "should be in board policy," in the second case. A third written comment came from a respondent who "disagreed," stating that he would "seek approval for policy, not each individual action!"

**Table 4 - 3**

**Prioritized Possible Role Components (School Board Relations)**

| Item | Possible Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 15 | The Superintendent rather than the Business Manager, presents the budget and other fiscal proposals to the Board for approval and adoption. | 3.33 |
| 26 | Assume full responsibility on all professional matters -- e.g., teacher selection and placement, in-service education -- without seeking prior approval of the Board. | 3.12 |
| 27 | In implementing Board policy, the Superintendent assumes full responsibility for issuing administrative rules and regulations without prior approval of the Board. | 2.97 |

Table 4-4 represents a degree of consensus in that it is improbable or unlikely that any superintendent would "take directions from individual School Board members." One written comment suggested a receptiveness to directions from a "collective decision of the board" and another suggested a willingness to "take advice," but that "should not be construed as direction".

**Table 4 - 4**

**Prioritized Improbable Role Components (School Board Relations)**

| Item | Improbable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 23 | Take directions from individual School Board members. | 1.60 |

Five questionnaires contained comments somewhere in this section, and/or write-ins in the questionnaire supplement which point to a major theme which has emerged from this study. Comments such as "through delegation of authority" (re: item 16), "delegate some" (re: items 4 and 8), and "only in conjunction with . . ." (re: item 19) all point to a broadening concept of the role of the superintendent -- the **superintendency**. This theme was evident in unsolicited write-ins throughout the questionnaire, in the questionnaire supplement, and in the interviews.

Questionnaire supplement write-ins which would be classified under the topic of "superintendent-school board relations" were:

(a) develop and exercise sound leadership in strategic planning in his/her district. (a second was very similar)

(b) liaison with the Department of Education.

(c) liaison with Denominational Education Councils.

(d) be aware of legal issues in education.

***Improving Educational Opportunity***

Tables 4-5 through 4-8 classify the 24 role component/descriptors comprising the "improving educational opportunity" area as "vital," "probable," "possible," and "improbable." There were no "non-components." Table 4-5 indicates that six out of the 24 component/descriptors in the area have been classified as "vital."

Table 4 - 5

**Prioritized Vital Role Components (Educational Opportunity)**

| Item | Vital Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 29 | Consider his primary responsibility to be the maintenance of the highest quality of instruction. | 4.80 |
| 30 | Provide leadership in evaluating and improving the educational program in the district. | 4.70 |
| 28 | Serve as a leader of the Board, the staff, and the community in the improvement of the educational system. | 4.63 |
| 47 | Make an annual report to the School Board and to the Department of Education on the educational program in his schools. | 4.63 |
| 40 | Encourage teachers to use new teaching procedures and materials. | 4.57 |
| 37 | Use the results of research in planning the educational program. | 4.53 |

Table 4-6 which follows indicates that eleven out of the 24 component/ descriptors in the "improving educational opportunity" area have been classified as "probable." With reference to item 41, mandating a superintendent to "secure first-hand information about the quality of the educational program through classroom visits and conferences with individual teachers," one superintendent who "disagreed" explained that "time does not allow," and another who "agreed" qualified his choice, saying: "as time permits -- delegate much of this".

Item 51 presents a conundrum, because according the Schools Act, the authority for the expulsion of students rests with the Minister of Education -- superintendents recommend expulsion(s) to him. To the knowledge of the writer, no expulsion of any student from any school has occurred in recent years in the province; and yet retaining "the authority to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations" was ranked as a "probable" role component/ descriptor. One superintendent qualified his "strongly agree" response with the write-in: "in accordance with Schools Act and by-laws." Another placed a question mark above the word "retain," and then "agreed."

Table 4 - 6

**Prioritized Probable Role Components (Educational Opportunity)**

| Item | Probable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 38 | Secure agreement among his educational personnel on the objectives of the schools in his system. | 4.47 |
| 39 | Work more closely with principals than with teachers, and through the school principals communicate to the teaching staff what the administration and Board wish done within the school system. | 4.43 |
| 48 | Provide for a comprehensive program of periodic system-wide evaluation and use this information for the improvement of education in his schools. | 4.37 |
| 36 | Co-operate willingly, re time and effort, with researchers who are attempting to advance knowledge in his field. | 4.35 |
| 50 | Develop policies for promoting pupils from one school level to another. | 4.00 |
| 41 | Secure first-hand information about the quality of the educational program through classroom visits and conferences with individual teachers. | 3.93 |
| 33 | Develop, with the co-operation of the staff, criteria for the selection of teachers. | 3.90 |
| 44 | Secure outside help from "experts" when curriculum changes are being considered. | 3.77 |
| 35 | Conduct research concerning educational problems of the school and community. | 3.73 |
| 51 | Retain the authority to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations. | 3.62 |
| 34 | Initiate and direct curriculum studies within his own system. | 3.60 |

Looking forward, table 4-7 lists the prioritized possible role component/-descriptors in the "improving educational opportunity" area of superintendents' responsibility. With reference to item 31, a rookie superintendent who had several years of previous experience as an assistant superintendent wrote-in that an "assistant superintendent" would "direct the development of programs for the school grades." His response was changed from "strongly agree" to "disagree" -- suggesting that on a second

thought, he was trying to distinguish between the role of the superintendent and the role of his assistants, rather than thinking of the role of the superintendency in totality as most respondents appear to have been doing.

With reference to item 42 and the responsibility to evaluate the work of teachers and report to the School Board and the Department of Education, one write-in indicated that he would report to the Board but not the Department, and another that the responsibility of the superintendent for evaluation was only "in general, not on specific teachers." Both of these respondents "agreed" with the statement. Item 43 drew a comment to the effect that the preparation of curriculum materials was a Department of Education responsibility.

**Table 4 - 7**

**Prioritized Possible Role Components (Educational Opportunity)**

| Item | Possible Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 49 | The Superintendent determines which school a pupil shall attend. | 3.48 |
| 31 | Direct the development of programs for the school grades. | 3.47 |
| 32 | Organize staff activities for upgrading the curriculum. | 3.13 |
| 42 | Inspect and evaluate the work of the teachers and report to the School Board and the Department of Education on their efficiency in instruction. | 2.70 |
| 46 | Make no major curriculum changes without first seeking public support. | 2.67 |
| 43 | Direct the preparation of curriculum materials and the selectionof textbooks, workbooks, teaching aids, and classroom supplies. | 2.63 |

Table 4-8 lists "mak(ing) curriculum changes without consulting the teaching staff" as the only "improbable" role component/descriptor in this section. There were no write-ins, leading one to speculate that the more collaborative type of decision making generally espoused by superintendents may be the cause of rejecting this item. This, however, is a doubtful explanation, because if the same classification of responses by

mathematical means had been applied in 1972 as in 1993, item 45 would then have been a "non-component".

**Table 4 - 8**

**Prioritized Improbable Role Components (Educational Opportunity)**

| Item | Improbable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 45 | Make curriculum changes without consulting the teaching staff. | 1.70 |

Four additional role component/descriptors provided by respondents in the "questionnaire supplement" are related to the area of "improving educational opportunity." They were:

(a) keep recommending to the Board a "whole-language" [child-centred] approach rather than a "back-to-the-basics" [business] approach to education.

(b) keep school trustees informed and abreast of major current educational trends or developments.

(c) always be aware of curriculum issues, although not always directly involved.

(d) place student achievement above all else as the main reason for the existence of schools.

It is interesting that item "d" in this list appears to be similar in meaning to questionnaire item 29, with which the author of item "d" "strongly agreed." But if anything, the emphasis here is stronger.

***Obtaining and Developing Personnel***

This section, including tables 4-9 through 4-12, presents prioritized questionnaire results in the area of "obtaining and developing personnel." Of the 25 role component/descriptors in this section of the questionnaire, only three were rated "vital." They are prioritized in table 4-9. In a written-in comment, one superintendent of long tenure stated regarding items 54 - 56: "in concert together with principals." (In spite of his "strongly agreeing" with all of these three role component/descriptors, items 54 and 55 were ranked only as "probable role component/descriptors" and therefore appear in table 4-10 later in this section.)

Table 4 - 9

**Prioritized Vital Role Components (Personnel)**

| Item | Vital Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 66 | Refuse to recommend the dismissal of a teacher the public wants dismissed if he feels that the public complaint is invalid. | 4.63 |
| 72 | Secure the co-operation of the staff in carrying out recommendations and policies. | 4.60 |
| 56 | Recommend for suspension or dismissal a teacher or principal whose service does not meet his expectations or those of his supervisory staff. | 4.57 |

Thirteen out of 25 possible role component/descriptors in the area of "obtaining and developing personnel" have been have been ranked as "probable." They have been prioritized in table 4-10.

Two write-ins regarding item 76 elucidate the thinking of superintendents regarding "accepting full responsibility for the decisions of (their) subordinates." The first "agreed" with the statement, yet added: "but if they continuously foul" -- implying some unfavourable consequence to a subordinate if his decisions were not of an acceptable calibre. The second was "undecided," adding that he considered it his responsibility, "only if given full responsibility in hiring."

One respondent indicated that item 53 (located in table 4-11) was the "business manager's job." Also, beside item 71 he pencilled in the words "business manager," but he rated item 53 as "disagree" and item 71 as "strongly agree," suggesting that while the selection and appointment of non-professional staff were a business manager's role, their in-service training would very much involve himself. The relative ranking of these two items would suggest that to a degree, other superintendents might agree.

Table 4 - 10

**Prioritized Probable Role Components (Personnel)**

| Item | Probable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 52 | Recommend to the Board the appointment of professional employees on the basis of their qualifications for particular services. | 4.40 |
| 60 | The Superintendent handles teacher grievances. | 4.38 |
| 58 | Act as a liaison between teaching personnel and School Board. | 4.23 |
| 73 | Assume responsibility in selecting the administrative and supervisory staff. | 4.23 |
| 54 | Assign professional staff to their respective duties. | 4.17 |
| 76 | The Superintendent accepts full responsibility for the decisions of his subordinates. | 4.17 |
| 74 | Transfer teachers from one school to another within the district. | 4.10 |
| 62 | The Superintendent presides over grievance committees. | 4.07 |
| 67 | Seek able people for open positions rather than considering only those who apply. | 3.93 |
| 55 | Select and nominate teachers for promotion. | 3.87 |
| 71 | Provide a program of training so that the custodial staff will operate the school plant effectively and efficiently. | 3.77 |
| 59 | Involve both teachers and other professional staff members in Board meetings. | 3.53 |
| 65 | Act on behalf of the Board in the negotiation of salaries of nonprofessional employees. | 3.50 |

Table 4-11 lists the prioritized "possible" role component/descriptors in the area of "obtaining and developing personnel." A write-in regarding item 75 justifies one superintendent who "strongly agrees" that he would "consider the personal life and attributes of his subordinates in his evaluation of their merit." He adds: "they are role models." That particular item garnered a full range of responses, from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree".

On one questionnaire, no response was given for items 60 - 63, all of which deal with handling teacher grievances. This respondent wrote-in: "procedure determined by collective agreement".

**Table 4 - 11**

**Prioritized Possible Role Components (Personnel)**

| Item | Possible Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 53 | Recommend to the Board the appointment of non-professional employees on the basis of their qualifications for particular services. | 3.40 |
| 68 | Give consideration to local values or feelings regarding race, religion, national origin, in filling vacant teaching positions. | 3.31 |
| 75 | Consider the personal life and attributes of his subordinates in his evaluation of their merit. | 3.23 |
| 70 | Develop and keep a confidential file on his professional employees. | 3.03 |
| 61 | He (Superintendent) and the Board handle teacher grievances. | 2.93 |
| 64 | Decide on the teaching of controversial social and political issues. | 2.72 |
| 57 | Participate in professional negotiations as a third party, serving as a resource both to the teachers and to the Board. | 2.62 |

Table 4-12 lists the prioritized "improbable" role component/descriptors in the area of "obtaining and developing personnel".

**Table 4 - 12**

**Prioritized Improbable Role Components (Personnel)**

| Item | Improbable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 63 | Refrain from taking any part in professional negotiations, leaving the field entirely to representatives of the staff and the Board. | 1.83 |
| 69 | Make an annual report to the Board concerning each member of the teaching staff. | 1.72 |

One "questionnaire supplement" contained an item which the respondent felt had not been covered by the questionnaire. He considered as a "vital" component/descriptor the statement: "Implement collective agreements and interpret articles for staff and Board." (There were no collective agreements in school administration in Newfoundland 25 years ago.)

***Providing and Maintaining Funds and Facilities***

On the questionnaire were twenty component/descriptors in the "providing and maintaining funds and facilities" section. In tables 4-13 through 4-16 these are grouped and prioritized as "vital," "probable," etc. In this section only 60% of the items were ranked as "vital" or "probable." In 1971, based on the rounded-off figures available, the comparative figure was only 55%.

Relative to his responsibility to "prepare for the School Board a long-range capital construction program based on enrolment forecasts and anticipated expansion" (item 91), one respondent enlarged the compass of the descriptor "expansion" by adding a "/reduction" resulting in "expansion/reduction" -- a tacit reminder that the growth and expansion so prevalent in the '70s does not continue universally unabated. He ranked this new descriptor SA ("strongly agree").

Table 4-13 presents the prioritized listing of "vital" role component/descriptors in the area of "providing and maintaining funds and facilities".

Table 4 - 13

**Prioritized Vital Role Components (Funds/Facilities)**

| Item | Vital Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 91 | Prepare for the School Board a long-range capital construction program based on enrolment forecasts and anticipated expansion. | 4.60 |
| 89 | Provide professional advice to the School Board on planning new buildings, extensions, and renovations, and in arranging transportation systems. | 4.57 |
| 80 | Establish a budget committee to help him in drafting the annual budget. | 4.50 |
| 90 | Make recommendations to the School Board with regard to boundaries of new attendance areas when new schools are opened. | 4.50 |

Throughout this section, a total of fourteen written-in comments contain the phrase "business manager," and two comments speak of "delegating." They refer mainly to items 82 - 86, and 91 - 93; and were generally accompanied by a "disagree" rating. This suggests that in spite of the growing concept of "superintendency," in the thinking of some respondents at least, a distinction continues to exist between the role of the business manager and that of the superintendent; and unfortunately, the design of the questionnaire did not allow respondents the luxury of discriminating between the role of the superintendent as an individual, and the role of the superintendency. And as clarified by the interviews, many of the items in this section are not part of the specific role of the superintendent, but are a part of the role of the superintendency.

Regarding the responsibility to "inspect all school buildings in the course of construction to ensure that they are being built in accordance with plans, specifications, and contracts" as per item 92, a superintendent wrote-in: "This is the responsibility of the Board's architectural consultants." A second stated: "Not personally, that's why we hire engineering consultants." And yet the ranking of item 92 as a "probable" role component/descriptor indicates that in the thinking of the majority it is at least a part of the concept of superintendency.

Table 4-14 presents the prioritized listing of the "probable" role component/descriptors in the area of "providing and maintaining funds and facilities".

**Table 4 - 14**

**Prioritized Probable Role Components (Funds/Facilities)**

| Item | Probable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 82 | See that proper accounting procedures are used. | 4.43 |
| 77 | Assume final and over-all authority over the business and financial affairs of the school system. | 4.31 |
| 83 | Arrange for the accounting system to be organized in sufficient detail to make computations of important unit costs possible. | 4.30 |
| 78 | Be responsible for expenditures authorized in the budget. | 4.20 |
| 84 | Report regularly to the Board on the status of all accounts covered by the annual budget. | 3.80 |
| 92 | Inspect all school buildings in the course of construction to ensure that they are being built in accordance with plans, specifications, and contracts. | 3.63 |
| 94 | Personally inspect all school plants at least once a year. | 3.57 |
| 96 | Grant the use of school buildings and school facilities for community purposes. | 3.53 |

The five items presented in table 4-15 which follows comprise the list of component/descriptors in the area of "providing and maintaining funds and facilities" for relevance little consensus exists among questionnaire respondents.

Table 4 - 15

**Prioritized Possible Role Components (Funds/Facilities)**

| Item | Possible Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 85 | Submit reports regularly to each individual charged with the use of funds or supplies, indicating the status of his account. | 3.40 |
| 93 | Be responsible for the supervision and maintenance of school buildings and school equipment. | 3.28 |
| 86 | Sign cheques on behalf of the Board. | 3.07 |
| 95 | Provide the Board with lists and specifications of school furniture, equipment, teaching materials, and supplies. | 3.03 |
| 88 | The Superintendent may transfer budgetary allocations, when necessary, from one section of the budget to another after the itemized budget has been approved and adopted by the Board. | 2.83 |

Table 4-16 contains a prioritized list of "improbable" component/descriptors in the area of "providing and maintaining funds and facilities." Item 79, "approv(ing) orders for supplies and equipment," drew this unsolicited write-in: "Should flow from budget & policy. Check, yes to see that they are being done. This is a clerical/-accountant matter."

Item 87 drew two comments. To a degree public expectations and certain provincial legislation may pre-dispose superintendents and boards to "favour local firms in the awarding of school contracts even though this may increase school expense somewhat," but one respondent wrote-in simply: "no rip-offs." The second commented "unfortunately this choice is limited," which could also be a reflection on the fact that in many outlying districts, certain services are simply not available locally.

Table 4 - 16

**Prioritized Improbable Role Components (Funds/Facilities)**

| Item | Improbable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 79 | Approve orders for supplies and equipment. | 2.37 |
| 81 | In drawing up the budget give priority consideration to cost factors over educational needs. | 2.28 |
| 87 | Favour local firms in the awarding of school contracts even though this may increase school expense somewhat. | 1.87 |

The "questionnaire supplement" contained additional role component/ descriptors written-in. The following relate to the area of "providing and maintaining funds and facilities":

(a) endorse and recommend to the Board a unitariat system of operation rather than a dual system -- both business and professional components answerable to the superintendent.

(b) delegate responsibility to assistant superintendent[s]. (A second write-in by another superintendent was very similar.)

***Maintaining Effective Community Relations***

The fifth and final area of superintendents' responsibility, "maintaining effective community relations," contained eighteen possible role component/descriptors. In this section they are grouped as "vital," "probable," etc., and then prioritized by mathematical mean scores in tables 4-17 through 4-21.

Item 97 which was ranked highest in this section is almost identical to the "duty" of the superintendent to "make known to the public the policies of the school board and enlist support of the public for the school board's program" (Schools Act, consolidated 1990, section 18[o]).

Table 4-17 presents the list of "vital" role component/descriptors in this area.

Table 4 - 17

**Prioritized Vital Role Components (Community Relations)**

| Item | Vital Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 97 | Communicate to the public the Board's policies and enlist the public's support for the Board's program. | 4.73 |
| 114 | Work on committees sponsored by the Department of Education and professional organizations. | 4.63 |

In the following table (table 4-18) are presented the prioritized listing of "probable" role component/descriptors in the area of "maintaining effective community relations".

Table 4 - 18

**Prioritized Probable Role Components (Community Relations)**

| Item | Probable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 105 | Establish regular channels of communications with local media. | 4.47 |
| 99 | Diagnose, identify, and interpret community needs and expectations. | 4.33 |
| 107 | Keep his office open to community members at all times. | 4.33 |
| 100 | Help the School Board and the community to assess the community's capacity to support the educational program. | 4.31 |
| 113 | Write articles for professional journals which will be of benefit to others in the profession. | 4.30 |
| 101 | Encourage the formation of local committees to co-operate with the School Board in studying school problems. | 4.27 |
| 106 | Provide a speaker's bureau to accommodate invitations from major civic groups. | 3.62 |
| 109 | The Superintendent avoids involvement with factional groups in the community. | 3.62 |
| 102 | Assist in the co-ordination of school and community activities. | 3.50 |

Table 4-19 which follows, presents the prioritized "possible" role component/descriptors in this section.

Three write-ins associated with item 103 suggested that "upon request," "when requested," "only as a guest" would a superintendent "take an active part in the activities of parent-teacher associations." Two of these respondents "agreed" while the third "disagreed" with the statement.

**Table 4 - 19**

**Prioritized Possible Role Components (Community Relations)**

| Item | Possible Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 108 | Favour the establishment of lay advisory committees in the administration of the school district. | 3.13 |
| 111 | Occasionally compromise with local pressure groups. | 2.77 |
| 103 | Take an active part in the activities of parent-teacher associations. | 2.73 |

Table 4-20 following, lists the prioritized "improbable" role component/-descriptors in the area of "maintaining effective community relations." These are items which it is generally agreed would not comprise part of the superintendent's responsibility, or areas in which they would not normally be involved. Referring to superintendents' "maintain(ing) active membership in the teachers' professional association" (item 104), one veteran superintendent who "disagreed" commented: "as an associate only." A second, also with a long tenure in office, "strongly disagreed" with the statement, adding one word: "UNION!" -- a tacit reminder that in Newfoundland, the teachers' professional organization has also become a labour union.

With reference to item 110 -- "take a neutral stand on any issue on which the community is evenly split" -- one respondent wrote-in: "Neutral until all sides considered. Then choose the right one." Another commented on item 111 that he would "consult" rather than "'play up to' influential local citizens." He did not rank the statement.

Table 4 - 20

**Prioritized Improbable Role Components (Community Relations)**

| Item | Improbable Role Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 104 | Maintain active membership in the teachers' professional association. | 2.20 |
| 110 | Take a neutral stand on any issue on which the community is evenly split. | 2.10 |
| 112 | "Play up to" influential local citizens. | 1.52 |

Table 4-21 presents the list of role non-component/descriptors in the area of maintaining effective community relations. There is only one. In fact, this is the only item classified as a role non-component/descriptor in the entire 114-item questionnaire. There was strong consensus that superintendents should not "take an active part in School Board elections, such as campaigning for, or endorsing candidates."

Table 4 - 21

**Prioritized Role Non-Components (Community Relations)**

| Item | Role Non-Component/Descriptor | Mean |
|---|---|---|
| 98 | Take an active part in School Board elections, such as campaigning for, or endorsing candidates. | 1.10 |

The questionnaire supplement contained several additional role component/-descriptors provided by superintendents who felt these aspects of their work had not been included in the questionnaire items. Items provided which would come under the area of "maintaining effective community relations" are:

(a) be comfortable in public relations work and dealing with the media.

(b) must, at all times, be very cognizant of local pressure groups, which more and more will impact on the future educational process.

(c) should be involved in the "politics" of education in his district, playing an influential role.

(d) be . . . aware of public expectations and changes in the public's profile.

(e) know how to handle controversy without being trapped by the loudest and often "wrongest".

### *Interview Findings*

Presented in this division of the chapter are major themes emerging from analysis of interview responses as they relate to the present role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland.

#### *From Superintendent to Superintendency*

One of the major themes which has emerged from this study is the shift in emphasis in the role of the superintendent from "superintendent" to "superintendency." This change in emphasis has been referred to in the discussions of questionnaire responses in the preceding section. It possibly should have been included in Chapter Five which reports the study findings related to changes in the nature of the role of the superintendent of education. However, for three reasons: (a) because it is so overriding in all sub-areas of the study, (b) because it has emerged so clearly from both the solicited and unsolicited comments on the questionnaires, and (c) because the concept of superintendency serves well to broaden the understanding of the present role of the superintendent, it is included here in Chapter Four.

In the interviews, eleven of fourteen individual superintendents made reference to the ideas included in the concept of the superintendency. Several had alluded to it in their own way before its significance began to crystallize in the mind of the researcher, at which poimnt he consequently began to question later subjects more specifically about it. For example, in response to a question about time spent in hiring staff, a superintendent interviewed during the pilot study began his response: "If you look at the superintendency as the superintendent plus the four assistants that I have with me. . . ." A later interviewee made this statement in reference to programming for handicapped students: "The role of the superintendent has changed considerably. If you look as the assistant superintendent as handling it, but yet as the superintendency. . . ." The concept of "superintendency" includes the ideas of: (a) wide-ranging and overall responsibility, (b) delegation of authority/responsibility, (c) team work and team leadership -- the superintendent being team leader, (d) group involvement in decision making, and (e) duty

to respond to public pressures (accountability). Some of the interview comments were broadly focused and lengthy, others quite succinct.

***Definition***. It was during the last one of the interviews that a senior superintendent brought the issue most sharply into focus with the following statement:

> I would credit Cyril Pinsent with putting quite a bit of flesh on this in a delivery that he gave back in the superintendents' annual meeting of 1984. . . . In fact, I can remember his talking about this, and it really crystallized it for me, because what he said was: what started off as a superintendent doing things has now become a superintendency doing things. And a **superintendency**, if you like, is a combination of the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, the appropriate principals, the board where they are involved. . .

Commenting earlier, another senior superintendent concurred with this definition of the superintendency, but he raised the issue of the role of program co-ordinators who are based at board office. He saw them only to a degree as part of the superintendency, depending on exactly how they were being used. He noted:

> If you want to take the line staff relationships, the line relationship here is the board, superintendent, assistant superintendents, and principals; and then teachers. And whereas the co-ordinators are treated as support staff and not with line responsibilities -- "facilitators" more so than "co-ordinator" would be a more appropriate term for the way we use them. . . .
>
> Some boards have had program co-ordinators doing strictly administrative details, like negotiating collective agreements, or sitting in on the evaluation of teachers or evaluating teachers. . . . [We've done that in some instances, for example in the area of French where the evaluators -- the assistant superintendents -- may not have expertise in French] we have the French co-ordinator having some input into that, but only to that degree.
>
> I would see [every role in the board office as part of the superintendent's] role in the sense that the superintendent's role is to see that whatever programs and services that are needed and are feasible are in place . . . and to that degree I see the co-ordinators as being a very essential part of that role.

Stating his position even more strongly, a recently-retired superintendent was definitive in his inclusion of the program co-ordinators as a part of the superintendency. Replying to the question: "Now is it your perception then, that if a program co-ordinator develops an alternate course of study for a particular curriculum area, then he's part of

that broad term superintendency?," he declared: "That's the other part of the superintendency. It's the program area of the superintendency . . . helping to deliver what goes on in the school." He went right on to discuss the role of the business manager as a part of the superintendency:

> I suppose if you come up with a good gung-ho business manager who helps get things in order in the school, and to keep the place clean, well-provided, with a safe environment if you like -- that person has done something for you there too. And I think you have that in your own power as superintendent, to do something like that . . . because I think you can work through the business manager who can then get other things done from another perspective altogether.

Presenting another dichotomy of roles, a somewhat younger incumbent stated: "That's the two main roles [the superintendent] plays -- he's the CEO . . . but in addition to that he's also the professional advisor. . . ." In another interview, the superintendent of one of the largest boards in the Province was asked whether he agreed or disagreed with the statement: "The role of the superintendent includes the work of his close associates." He replied: "Yes. Oh, most definitely."

***The early role.*** One of the veteran superintendents looked backward to 1969, and described what superintendents were actually doing at that time. He contrasted that with the more recent situation saying:

> In '69 I don't believe that the general public, the board people understood the role of the superintendent too well. They weren't sure. They'd just come off the system of where they had supervising inspectors from the Department. There [had been] no organization at the board level beyond the principal.
>
> The change as I see it that's taken place is in '69 the superintendent generally didn't have that large a staff working with him. He had to do a lot of the work himself. As time went on from '69 until recently . . . there's been more staff to work with. . . . You'd find now that the superintendent directs more -- you know you've got a couple of assistants so you direct a lot of the work there. But more delegation -- there's more delegation in the job.

***The evolution to superintendency.*** Several individuals spoke about the reality of the early board offices as a one-man-show, especially amongst the smaller boards just after re-organization. They referred to those early superintendents as "a much more authoritative figure," as a "jack of all trades and master of none." Detailing the process

of change, the growth from a one-man show at the board office to an administrative team, another superintendent who has a rich background in Newfoundland history recalled that:

> [In the early '70s] . . . in most places [the superintendent] was the only person that was on staff at board office. . . . And then they hired what they called a treasurer what we call a business manager to-day. . . . And then an evolution took place whereby school boards obtained program co-ordinators, or you could call them curriculum specialists. . . . Then you had, as you know, expanded whereby boards depending their populations received assistant superintendents. . . . And then as we came further, boards started to obtain the services of specialists like speech pathologists and educational psychologists, and therefore [gradually] the onus of responsibility, and the burden came off the superintendent.

He went right on to describe the present role:

> And I see the superintendent now as a person who sets policy and sets direction for the board, sets its climate and is more involved in public relations, in creating good atmosphere amongst the elected boards, a good co-operation between the superintendent and the elected body, and in working together as a team and in running hopefully a smooth co-operative district. So it has gone from -- if you want to put it that way -- a one-man-show, to a more of a team effort, and obviously the superintendent you'd want to be super human to do all the responsibility and roles in the past. You'd want to be super human. In fact, you couldn't do it. You couldn't do justice to it. I don't think any individual, man or woman, could have done justice to what would be expected of him or her back in the '60s. It's changed significantly. . . .

The superintendent of a small central-island school board described the shift or change to the concept of superintendency. However, unlike most of the superintendents in the province, possibly in part because of his smaller board, he felt that he was able to be more actively involved in the educational leader role. His description of the evolution follows:

> I think the superintendent has evolved from a person who . . . managed the district, looked after strictly probably two or three specific areas. One being funding -- budgeting and managing and running the district from that particular perspective. Secondly -- looking after staffing -- staffing districts . . . more or less doing what needs to be done to get the teachers in their classrooms. . . .
>
> So from the point of view of staffing schools, from the point of view of managing schools, from a financial perspective and making sure that buildings and facilities were well looked after. . . . from there over the

> last 25 years or there abouts, I think it's evolved to a point where a superintendent is much more involved now in the teaching/learning situation, and must become more involved in staff development, professional development, and that kind of thing.
>
> And sort of while he has to keep an eye on things and make sure that budgets are balanced and so on and so on, I think the superintendent right now has to be more involved in educational [and] professional issues than just managerial type issues.

***Current responsibilities.*** However, as certain "burdens" came off the shoulders of superintendents in the shift from superintendent to superintendency, as superintendents were able to transfer former responsibilities to new members of the superintendency team, new responsibilities and pressures quickly took their place. In response to the question: "[Are you] suggest[ing] that the range, or the amount of work that is included as a superintendent's responsibility is actually greater to-day than it was then?," one old timer who had spent the entire quarter century in board office, and most of it in the superintendent's chair stated categorically:

> The overall responsibility is, yes. There's no doubt that superintendents are into more and more things all the time. We've got the Education Act that was there, and the Schools Act of 1969 -- the duties were there. They simply didn't have staff I think to do everything that was there. One person couldn't do it all.
>
> Now I think superintendents are doing more work, but it's now . . . what I call a delegation of authority. You delegate a lot of things. You have more people reporting to you.

***Delegated/shared responsibilities.*** Several superintendents spoke about what they didn't do that they or their predecessors had done 25 years ago -- generally responsibilities that had come off their shoulders but for which they were nonetheless still responsible. In this context, a Roman Catholic superintendent mentioned the supervision of instruction, expressing his regrets that he no longer was able to be directly involved at the program delivery level. None of the superintendents in this study indicated that he was personally involved in the supervision of instruction. This was consistently delegated to assistants and/or principals and sometimes co-ordinators were involved. Another area in which all superintendents agreed was in the area of delegating certain responsibilities to business managers. Although ultimately accountable for finances and budgets, superintendents were not directly involved in the day to day purchasing, paying

of bills, and other clerical functions. The afore mentioned Roman Catholic superintendent also talked about "downloading" or delegating responsibility to his business manager, because he was having to spend more of his time working at levels above the board. He stated:

> I do not get to the schools like I did before. And basically, it's what I say about downloading. I have basically had to download that kind of responsibility to my assistant superintendents. . . .
>
> So . . . we've said that the superintendent now deals with all the organizations at the board level and above. So I deal with the school trustees, and the Department, and with the Catholic Education Council, and whatever else -- the development organizations, and mining companies -- all those different groups . . . and then my assistant superintendents they look after all my principals, and my co-ordinators, and. . . .
>
> [With regard to the supervision of instruction], I depend on my assistant superintendents to meet very frequently with program co-ordinators and with my principals, and they keep me informed. And [the principals] don't see me that much . . . not like they used to. There was a time when I would have principals' meetings, but I don't have principals' meetings any more. That's the assistant superintendents' area.
>
> In terms of the business operation . . . there was a time when I would sit down with principals . . . but now the business manager and the assistant superintendents do this themselves.
>
> I do less, I guess, below the board level, and more above the board level, than I did before.

Staffing is an area which is generally delegated in Newfoundland, or at least partially delegated. The superintendent previously-cited from the pilot study had his assistants involved in staffing, and another from a small board said:

> We have an assistant superintendent whose mandate mainly is in the area of personnel, you know. Administering the staffing of schools and performance appraisal and making recommendations for tenure and so on. . . . Our business manager in that end of it looks after the support staff -- secretaries, janitors, and that kind of thing.

Speaking of other delegated responsibilities, he continued:

> Proper building maintenance and repair, looking after our facilities and so on, is handled mainly under the auspices of the business manager. But we have a maintenance supervisor who is hired full time, and that's technically his job.

> [I see this still as part of the role of the superintendent.] All I have to do now is to kind of keep an eye on things, to make sure for example that our windows are tight, and the roofs don't leak, and the painting is done, and all that kind of thing.
>
> But, we have to make sure that if there are renovations or whatever money is spent in this particular area is in line with educational objectives, or the overall strategic plan for the district -- and that's where I see myself coming in . . . whereas the maintenance supervisor doesn't have to really have an in depth understanding of whether this fits into the overall plan. . . . And my role would be more or less to try to educate him in that respect.

The superintendent of one of the largest boards in the Province added another major item to the list of superintendency responsibilities which in his case had been delegated to an assistant superintendent. The situation in most of the other boards was similar. Regarding programming for handicapped students in his large district, he declared:

> Now whether the superintendent role has changed or not, I can tell you that the role of the superintendency [has] in the sense that there's someone at board office like an assistant superintendent that didn't exist before, specifically devoted to dealing with students who have severe mental and physical handicaps. At this office right here, the assistant superintendent . . . responsible for curriculum spends at least 50% of his time right now doing absolutely nothing, only dealing with issues that involve the eduction opportunities for mentally and physically handicapped children or the mentally and physically challenged students . . . where as prior to I would say 1980 there was nobody other than the superintendent himself who dealt with these issues.

***Decision Making***. Many ideas are included under the general topic of "decision making." Basically, they involve the manner in which leaders make the many choices by which they chart the course of their organizations. In the interviews, the view that a new pattern of decision making marks educational leadership to-day was universally held. (For a fuller exploration of the role of the superintendent in decision making, see the "Decision making" sub-section under "Superintendent-School Board Relations" in Chapter Five.) One interviewee labelled it the "consultation approach:" "I would say that change [to] the consultation approach, and becoming a superintendency as opposed to a superintendent -- that . . . was a big change."

When asked about collaborative decision making, one superintendent voiced strong opposition to the term, claiming that that would allow all stake holders a virtual veto. He preferred consultation, counselling together, and then as a leader making an educated decision. Another superintendent spoke about the "human resources approach" as a form of consultative decision making:

> Probably, the way things operate over the years, the way business is operated and the way that I would say education as a business saw things operating showed that you were getting more into human resources approaches -- not telling people what to do, but finding out through them, working with them, what goes on. More consultation than was evident in 1969, certainly. There's a very big difference there. And if you were to look at the management of a business back in 1969 and the management of a school system, and compare, it's probably gone through the same type of evolution as well.

The superintendent of one of the largest boards in the Province described the process by which he attempted to surround himself with hand-picked key people whose capabilities would complement his own. This he did to enhance the quality of his decisions, and overall leadership. His words:

> I have always operated on the basis that whoever is in charge, has to make the final decision. But what that person has to do to be a good superintendent in my opinion, is he has to do a lot of introspection, and he has to do a lot of self analysis. He or she must identify what their strengths and weaknesses are, and they must hire people, or recommend to board to hire the people, and surround himself with people to compensate for his weaknesses.
>
> And the more you can do that, the more effective you're going to be in implementing the policies that the board asks you to do. For example, if I am the type of person who is a good organizer, but I may not be the best analytical person in the world, I have to make sure that I have someone that works with me who is good at analyzing problems. If I don't have a good background in curriculum, I have to make sure I have someone around me who has a good background in curriculum. If I am good at negotiating, then I will reserve that role for me, as a superintendent, but I will surround myself with people who will compensate for any weaknesses that I feel I have. . . .
>
> When you have people who are thinking along the same kind of trend and are aiming towards the same goal, and you've got people who compensate for each other's weaknesses, you have a very strong team. And the stronger your team is, the more the district is going to see that there is leadership coming from the district. And the more they see leadership

> coming from the district, the more they're going to want to become part of that process. And that's what I feel makes for a good superintendency.

A veteran superintendent summed up the impact of the changes in a significant evaluative comment:

> Before it was a more direct, the superintendent was almost a direct [manager]. . .
>
> And [now] you're getting a better quality work too, because now you've got people that are more expert in the various senses. When I started off, I was a generalist as far as curriculum was concerned. I thought I knew something about math, but now I've got people who work with me who know intimately what math and science is -- I have some very good people here, extremely good. Language arts, and I could go on and on. . . .
>
> Now you're getting the quality, but you've still got a lot of work because you've got so many people coming at you all the time with so many different things.

***Public and Government Expectations***

Feeling a great deal of pressure was expressed almost universally among the superintendents interviewed. A description of the present role of the superintendent in Newfoundland would be incomplete without taking a look at the pressures under which superintendents regularly function. And a major component of that pressure comes from expectations -- expectations from parents, students, community, media, business, government and any other stake holder in the educational enterprise. The majority of superintendents' comments regarding expectations tended to focus on parents and local community, certain pressure groups, and more local interests as they related to accessibility, standards of achievement, and efficiency. (For a complete discussion of superintendents' perceptions in this regard, see the "Demand for Higher Standards" section in Chapter Six.) However, three individuals focused some of their comments more broadly or spoke more generally; and hence their comments are used in this section to complement the picture of the present role of the superintendent.

The superintendent of a large Roman Catholic Board spoke of pressures which tended to move him to more the role of a corporation manager, and away from the classroom or any educator role entirely. His comments contrast sharply with the previously-cited superintendent of the small central-island school board who saw

things having "evolved to a point where a superintendent is much more involved now in the teaching/learning situation. . . ." The superintendent of the large Roman Catholic Board said:

> People are beginning to see the role [of the superintendent] more as a CEO of a corporation, and looking to the individual to move the organization forward as opposed to seeing the individual as the master teacher, or the person with all the educational answers. And I think years ago the superintendent was -- you saw the person more as an educator, but I think today you're beginning to see the person -- there has to be a strong educational component and background -- but there is an expectation to be your organization person.
>
> My task here, and the task of my assistants is essentially to move our organization, forward, in relationship to the goals and priorities and policies set by our school board, and the demands of the ministry, and [of] society, and so on.
>
> We have to keep our organization going forward, and unfortunately the cost of that is less involvement with [real educational issues].

Another Roman Catholic superintendent spoke about the pressure of standards imposed by building, fire safety, and health codes and/or regulations. He said:

> Facilities are more challenging [than previously] in the sense that the standard now is expected to be pretty high. . . .
>
> I think what you have seen is facilities aged quite a bit, and not even meeting modern safety standards in some cases -- health or fire safety standards -- and so you're in a dilemma as a superintendent, and whether you have the resources to even meet the regulations in terms of safety, certainly not to meet what parents would expect in terms of clean, modern facilities for their kids to go to school in. . . .

However, the most comprehensive list of pressures came from the superintendent of a small western school board. This individual had taken time to make some notes in preparation for the interview, and as he was working from his notes when he presented what follows, they have been reproduced here in note form -- itemized. Here, as concisely as practical is his list:

(a) There's all kinds of expectations from the . . . Division of Finance at the Department of Education.

(b) Expectations from your own staff members and so on to be accountable for the kinds of decisions that you are making for the volume of money for programs and staff development and so on.

(c) I find more and more you find staff members coming to the office with personal problems, and they just want somebody to talk to and for some reason they feel that you're the kind of person they could come and talk to. And I always keep a box of tissues in my desk drawer. . . .

(d) There's expectations nationally. . . . We know that there is a national demand for improvements in education, a demand for national standards, a demand for a return to the basics, and a demand for doing away with whole language approach and going back to a system that we know didn't work very well. . . .

(e) Expectations with respect to student retention. . . .

(f) Expectations for the district having a vision or mission.

(g) More co-operation between boards, and joint service agreements and these kinds of things. . . .

(h) And there's also expectations from other boards to be sending the staff that we're responsible for hiring to their board and so on.

(i) School improvement expectations.

(j) School reform expectations.

(k) Competition for funds, federal grants. I made a note today, I'm wondering whether or not we're doing a good job in finding out what federal funds are available, and grants. Are we getting our just share? In our board are the federal grants there? I keep hearing that some boards got federal funding to put off a particular program, and I'm wondering how did they get that, and could we get some, and so on. So I have to go back and ask my assistant superintendent, can you do some investigation and find out what's available, and how are other boards doing this, and are we getting our just share? So there is expectations that I have of myself, or somebody will have of me, because these federal monies are out there.

(l) Pre-school programs. There are expectations there for us to do something with pre-school. We don't really have a mandate to be doing anything with pre-school, but we have taken it on ourselves to do something for pre-school. We've got pre-school play groups set up in our schools, and the more that you do of that, the more the parents want you to do, and they just figure that's part of our mandate. And when you say actually we're not supposed to be doing that, and perhaps we're probably breaking some laws sometimes by having these students around our premises, but . . . try to prepare students for kindergarten.

(m) Our parenting program is something else that we're finding out we're going to have to try to get into more and more, because we're finding that family break-ups mean that there are a lot of problems there. . . . But what I'm thinking about is trying to have parents come to school evening time or whatever to take part in perhaps some kind of a short course. . . .

This list would clearly indicate that the superintendent's office could not long be occupied by anyone "faint of heart." A description of the present role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland would be incomplete without including the immense pressure of public and government expectations under which superintendents must function, and which are impacting and tending to shape the education superintendency within the Province.

***Nature of Superintendent's "Power"***

Contained in the shift from superintendent to superintendency is another shift -- a change in the nature of the superintendent's "power." A change in the way many administrative decisions are made was viewed as either a cause or an effect of that change by those who commented on this subject -- about half of those interviewed. The recently-retired superintendent previously mentioned, described the nature of the superintendent's power in 1969 and the gradual diffusing of that power in the subsequent years:

> The superintendent was certainly a focus of the Department of Education in getting the boards set up in the new operations after 1969. The boards didn't have their own organization, so they didn't have the equivalent of the NLSTA at that stage, and I would say that the superintendent had a lot of power then in '69. No question about it.
>
> There was a board, in many cases a smaller board than had come out of the original boards, and you had a smaller group coming together and having that type of person [the superintendent] there that boards never had before -- boards operated before and didn't even talk to principals, even though the principal was probably the main person that the board had to deal with. Many principals who were even supervising principals of some districts didn't get in on board meetings.
>
> So . . . the superintendent probably had some real power. [He] was expected to do many things. The superintendent was probably the last word on hiring . . . and was probably the last word on the termination, as well. I would say that boards often found out about some things after

> they were done, rather than they before. You could have many things happening, right from the superintendent's office, if you like.
>
> I think that power changed quite a bit to the extent that now when you talk to a superintendent, I don't think the superintendent wields any serious power these days. The superintendent probably conveys the last message in a way, but it is the result of the message that has grown through consultation at the school level, consultation at the district level, and consultation with the board as well. I think the whole consultative type of thing has grown up since the beginning there in '69. When it took place -- when that shift came, I am not exactly sure.

Taking a slightly different view, the superintendent of a large Roman Catholic Board agreed that there was power in the office of superintendent in 1969, but he felt that there was still real power there. According to him it was a different way of exercising power. His comment explaining his idea follows:

> The power of 25 years ago was there with the office. It's still here to-day. You still have the Education Act. You still have your terms and your responsibilities, and you still have your authority as such, as outlined in the *Collective Agreement*, all this kind of stuff. But the manner, the style of leadership has changed. . . . Writing out of OISE, Musella -- was it? -- writing about the superintendent, [who] coined a phrase, "Servant Leadership" -- servant leadership, as opposed to the traditional view of a general barking out orders.
>
> But our job really is . . . to work with our people and our job is to facilitate their work and support people whom we have in positions of responsibility and authority. One of my main tasks is to facilitate and support my assistant superintendents, and to work with our school principals, to work with our school board, and to help them do their roles, and carry them out -- as opposed to sit here and pull strings like a puppeteer and tell people what to do.
>
> When I started teaching with this school board, . . . in those days the superintendent was a rather august remote individual who had a lot of mouth and [he] called the shots. Now I think the superintendent still has the responsibility and the power to-day, but the manner of calling that shot is totally different than it was then.

As a means of exercising a type of derived power by maximizing a bottom-up type of activity, another Roman Catholic superintendent talked about empowering people by delegating or downloading responsibility, and then in a process which resembles the "servant leadership" described by one of the previous superintendents, enabling those given a responsibility to execute that responsibility.

> In the last number of years I'm finding ways to empower people that are in other administrative positions below me -- empower them to do the things that perhaps I would have been doing in the past. So there is more of that I think happening now, we are kicking responsibilities down the ladder more so than ever, in order for me as a superintendent to try to exercise some kind of leadership. . . .
>
> In my history as a superintendent the Department [of Education] was not overly big at one time, but I think it has grown considerably through the '80s, and I felt every time there was a new person added at the Department level, there was more work at the school board level that had to be addressed, because there were more people in there making work for us. And as a result all these things either had to be taken on by myself or somebody else in the office.
>
> But we are now just passing some of those things on to the school . . . you know before principals just managed the school I think to a great extent, but now we can empower them to be curriculum leaders.

Another dimension of "power" was explored by a retired interviewee who had had many years of experience as the CEO of his board. He viewed knowledge as a form of power when he stated:

> I guess it was Francis Bacon who said: "Knowledge itself is **power**." No question about it, if you have all the answers for a board meeting. If you have the information for a board meeting, you sit there as the person that the board, the trustees have to turn to.
>
> Now that might have been the case in '69, but as things moved along and the boards were elected, not just appointments from different church meetings or anything like this, but [the superintendents] got into the position where they realized: "Look, as a superintendent I have to make sure that on the board, they get the information that's necessary to make a policy decision." And I can argue policy and administration as much as I like trying to keep them separate, but when you get down to having to deal with probably the termination of somebody's contract, that's not policy, that's down to administration, if you like, and I'd better have the facts to back up whatever I am trying to do, because the board is going to ask me the questions, if I want their support.
>
> So, the whole thing gets to be the board now needs to know more and more about the operation.

A third Roman Catholic superintendent spoke extensively about the issues surrounding power and the exercise of that power. He spoke about the politics of power when asked about his possible "control of the agenda for his school board." After a long pause, and a chuckle, he stated: "Well, certain board members believe that," and then

went on to describe a process of guiding the agenda preparation, but certainly not "controlling" it:

> We send out the tentative agenda for the board meeting 10 to 12 days before the board meeting. On that it requests any board member who has an item which he wishes to have raised at the board meeting to call the business manager and so indicate. . .
>
> [The business manager] is the secretary of the board. She'll inform me, because on the day of the board meeting I will have a lunch meeting -- we'll have a meeting right here in this office with sandwiches, at this table -- and the chairman and I will go over the agenda for that evening, to see how things will be dealt with, the amount of time for each item, and indeed, whether an item is appropriate for a board meeting, or whether an item is appropriate for the open session or closed session of the board.
>
> As well then, at the beginning of the meeting, the agenda is approved by the board. After our prayer, the first item on the agenda is the approval of the agenda, so if the chairman had rejected an item, a person would still have an opportunity to place it on the agenda.
>
> Once the agenda is adopted by a majority vote of the board, that's the agenda for the evening. If not accepted by the board, it doesn't get done by the board.

This process is an example of what he calls "distributed power," a little bit of power in the hands of each of a number of people. "Well we have a phrase now -- the "stakeholders." . . . [And] it's that distributed power which be-devils any type of public administration to-day." He further illustrated by contrasting the process involved in the closing of two different schools, one in 1985, and the other only three years later. In the case of the first: "The board met on a Saturday morning and made the decision. The superintendent made his report, and three hours later the board had decided to close two schools. Motion passed, and everything." This superintendent further remarked:

> The board had not up to this time closed a school. . . . Or when it used to close a school, the parish priest used to walk in, or the superintendent used to walk in, and in effect say, "this school is closed." The board in 1985 was still operating that way, but the hullabaloo was considerable because when the board announced its decision -- I mean there was **tremendous** conflict. . . .

In the second case, beginning 18 months or two years later, the closing of the second school was effected only after a long process of public consultation, and involvement of

the individual members of the board. The superintendent knew what should be done, but that did not mean that it was possible to do it. He continued:

> So it was not decided at the board table. The mere fact that I had said that that's the best way to go didn't mean that that was going to be **the** way to go.
>
> Machiavelli described politics as the "art of the possible" -- it's not what **should** be done, it's what **can** be done. That's politics. So, in that particular instance, the involvement and the participation of the board members there made [the decision] possible.

He then made the following comment regarding "distributed power":

> You have to go out and negotiate. You have to negotiate with everybody. You have to negotiate with the Department, you have to negotiate with the NLSTA [Newfoundland and Labrador School Trustees Association], you have to negotiate with the association of Roman Catholic School Boards, you have to negotiate with the Catholic Education Council, you have negotiate with the NTA, you have to negotiate with your school principals, you have to negotiate with your assistants, with your program coordinators, with your PTA's . . . and it's all around the circle.

***Section Summary***. The nature of the superintendent's power has changed over the years. To-day's superintendent has power, but not power in the militaristic or dictatorial sense. It is power exercised in a different manner. The phrases "servant leadership," "empowering of subordinates," and "distributed power," all represent aspects of the new genre of power and the political savvy with which superintendents ply the "art of the possible".

### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter has presented the findings of the study regarding the nature of the present role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland, although as was pointed out, it was impossible to characterize the present role without becoming involved to a degree in the nature of changes in that role since 1969, and as well some of the causes of those changes.

The questionnaire results revealed a role characterized by widely varied pressures and responsibilities. It showed that superintendents placed great emphasis on their relationship with their boards, and their administrative responsibilities at the board level and above. Many of the functions of the superintendent were generally delegated to others on the superintendency team -- functions such as staffing, facility management, and even educational leadership in many cases. In the larger boards, the role has tended to become more the role of a corporation manager.

That superintendents attached greatest importance to their relations with their boards was indicated by the fact that 18 out of a possible 27 component/descriptors (67%) in that part of the questionnaire were ranked as "vital." These functions would include advising the board on finances and policy, informing the board on educational issues, carrying out duties assigned, and responsibility for overall leadership and administration. Improving educational opportunity, although still a major role responsibility ranked a distant second in importance with only 25% of the items ranked as "vital." Included among these vital component/descriptors were responsibility for maintaining and evaluating instructional quality, and for improving teaching and the educational system.

Most highly ranked in the area of providing and maintaining funds and facilities were responsibility for budgeting and responsibility for long-range planning for capital construction. In the area of obtaining and developing personnel, included were responsibilities for hiring and firing of staff, and securing their co-operation in carrying out recommendations and policies. Somewhat surprisingly there were only two "vital" role component/descriptors in the maintaining effective community relations area, indicating major responsibility for communicating with the public and working on certain

committees. This may have been because there was only one item on the questionnaire which mentioned the mass media.

From the interviews, it was the concept of "superintendency" as opposed to "superintendent" that was one of the most significant findings of the study. This concept included the ideas of: (a) wide-ranging and overall responsibility, (b) delegation of authority and/or responsibility, (c) team work and team leadership -- the superintendent being team leader, (d) group involvement in decision making, and (e) duty to respond to public pressures (i.e. accountability). Present superintendents are much more leaders of a superintendency team than they are a "one man show".

To-day's superintendent must work under a great deal of pressure from the expectations of parents, students, community, media, business, government and other groups of stakeholders. The majority of superintendents' comments regarding expectations tended to focus on parents and local community, certain lobby groups, and local interests as they related to programming, accountability, accessibility, standards of achievement, student retention, school improvement, non-academic services, and efficiency. Government holds similar but not identical expectations.

It is the perception of superintendents that the nature of their power has changed during the quarter century. To-day's superintendent still has power, but not the unchallenged authoritarian power of former years. It is power exercised in a different manner. To-day's superintendent is able to lead only when others are willing to follow, and the skills and patience often required to obtain that willingness comprise a finite part of the new genre of power. The phrases "servant leadership," "empowering of subordinates," and "distributed power," all represent aspects of that new power and the political savvy with which superintendents ply the "art of the possible".

The following quotations from the interviews summarize superintendents' perceptions regarding the nature of the present role. The first from the superintendent of a small mostly-rural board:

> I think [superintendents are] spending less time now in the technical managerial aspect of running school boards, and much more time immersed in the educational development of schools and teachers and board members for that matter.

> So the switch -- generally the role of the superintendent has changed considerably. Right now, I'm more of an educator than I am a manager. I spend a lot of time with education in the area of curriculum, for example, in the area of special needs, and the various demands that are there. So I find the role that I'm in right now, I'm doing more of what I'm trained to do.

And the superintendent of a larger, geographically diverse board said:

> We've touched on the superintendent creating a vision for the organization, and I think that's his role. . . . And you're into strategic planning and so on; school improvement, these two initiatives. We also talked about public relations. And of course the superintendent is the C.E.O. of the school board, so he has to keep the school board informed of what's going on throughout the district.
>
> But, in addition to that, there's one other area, and that's the area of accountability. The superintendent is accountable to the school board, but he also has to set in place a mechanism to keep everybody in the system accountable, because accountability is one of the key words throughout our nation right now. So a process of accountability has to be spearheaded by the superintendent.

And from the superintendent of one of the largest mostly-urban boards in the Province:

> I think that probably fundamental to the nature of the superintendency, is the individual's effort to improve educational opportunity for the professionals in the organization, for the students we serve, for the support staff. I think that's a fairly constant one that's gone all the way through [the years], although I believe in -- whether it's the nature of the superintendency as much as it is an effect for Newfoundland education -- education in 1993 is much more inclusive than it was in 1969.

## Chapter Five

# The Nature of Changes in the Role of the Superintendent

Presented in this chapter are the study findings regarding changes in the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland over the quarter century following 1969. The nature of these changes is examined from the perspective of those individuals who occupy or have recently occupied the office of the superintendent. Primarily, data were drawn from transcripts of fourteen semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with a stratified sample of subjects representing a majority of school boards operating in the Province near the close of the quarter century under study. Secondarily, comparative data were drawn from survey responses to the King questionnaire, administered in 1972 and again 1993; and a comparison of the Schools Act (1969) with the Schools Act (consolidated 1990).

The chapter comprises three major divisions: (a) Schools Act revisions -- 1969 to 1990, (b) comparative questionnaire results, and (c) interview findings.

### *Schools Act Revision and Consolidataion (1969 - 1990)*

A complete list of the duties of superintendents outlined in section 18 of the Schools Act (consolidated 1990) has been presented in Chapter Four. In the 1969 Act, duties of superintendents were given in section 19. Between the two lists there is a very close correspondence -- exactly 17 "duties" in each. Aside from editorial changes such as removal of capital letters, significant revisions occurred in only five of the paragraphs: [a], [h], [i], [p], and [q]. In the following comparison, the 1969 wording is presented first, and the 1990 wording follows in italics.

(a) attend meetings of the School Board and the Executive thereof

*(a) attend meetings of the school board and the executive committee*

The executive of most boards now functions as a recognized committee.

(h) exercise general supervision over all schools, property, teachers and, subject to subsection (2) of Section 15, other employees of the School Board and, to that end, ensure that each school is visited as frequently as feasible and at least twice in each school year

*(h) exercise general supervision over all schools, property, teachers and other employees of the school board and, to that end, ensure that each school is visited as frequently as feasible and at least twice in each school year*

The reference to "subsection (2) of section 15" was eliminated in the revisions. It read: "The Business Manager shall, unless the constitution of the School Board otherwise provides, be responsible, in carrying out his duties, to the School Board through the Superintendent." At that time, in some cases, business managers were viewed parallel to superintendents, and reported directly to the board. The change reflects a more clearly defined all-encompassing role for the superintendent, and a more clearly defined subordinate role for the business manager.

(i) in conjunction with the school principals and Board Supervisors concerned, articulate the programs in the elementary and secondary school grades and develop policies for promoting pupils from one school level to another

*(i) in conjunction with the school principals, articulate the programs in the elementary and secondary school grades and develop policies for promoting pupils from one school level to another*

Board supervisors were phased out after restructuring in 1969 - 1970. Their work was largely divided up among assistant superintendents, program co-ordinators, and principals.

(p) make, on forms prescribed by the Minister, annual reports to the School Board and to the Department on the educational program in the School Board's district and furnish copies of such reports to the appropriate Education Committee

*(p) make, on forms prescribed by the minister, annual reports to the school board and to the department on the educational program in the school board's district and provide copies of such reports to the appropriate educational council*

The change from "Education Committee" to "educational council" reflects parallel changes in wording in the *Department of Education Act (1990)* as compared to its predecessor, the *Department of Education and Youth Act (1970)*. Both refer to what are now known as the Denominational Education Councils (DEC's) prescribed in section 15 of the consolidated *Schools Act*.

(q) perform such other duties as may be assigned to him from time to time by the School Board, provided, however, that these duties are consistent with this Act.

(q) *perform those other duties that may be assigned to him or her by the school board, where these duties are consistent with this Act.*

The changes in this paragraph are primarily editorial, including the use of more inclusive language with reference to superintendents.

### *Comparative Questionnaire Results*

In this section, following the outline of the questionnaire itself, the comparative questionnaire results are delineated. Mathematical means of responses for the years 1971 and 1993 were compared, and in questionnaire items where the difference was 0.5 or greater, or in cases where the change was greater than half the remaining distance to the end of the rating scale, the change was considered significant (deserving of comment), and those items are presented in this section. In addition, those items in which the mathematical means of responses change over time was 0.8 or greater were considered "major changes." Other items not meeting these criteria have not been included in this section. (For a summary of all comparative means, see Appendix B.)

***Superintendent-school board relations***. Eleven out of 27 questionnaire items experienced a significant change in importance as a role component/descriptor, as indicated by response mathematical means. Table 5-1 summarizes the changes.

Table 5-1

**Changes from 1971 to 1993 (School Board Relations)**

| Item | Role component/descriptor | Mathematical means | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1971 | 1993 | diff. |
| **26 | Assume full responsibility on all professional matters -- e.g., teacher selection and placement, in-service education -- without seeking prior approval of the Board. | 2.3 | 3.1 | **+0.8** |
| 4 | Attend all meetings of the Board and its committees, except where his own salary, tenure, or efficiency are under consideration. | 4.0 | 4.6 | +0.6 |
| 13 | Be responsible for the preparation and development of the detailed budget and fiscal policies for Board consideration. | 3.9 | 4.5 | +0.6 |
| 18 | Carry out decisions of the School Board with which he may not personally agree. | 4.1 | 4.7 | +0.6 |
| 21 | Defend Board policies publicly even when he may personally disagree with them. | 4.1 | 4.6 | +0.5 |
| *20 | Identify himself with the Board and its policies. | 4.4 | 4.8 | +0.4 |
| *1 | Carry out duties assigned him by the Education Act. | 4.6 | 4.9 | +0.3 |
| *2 | Carry out duties assigned him by Board policies and regulations. | 4.7 | 4.9 | +0.2 |
| *5 | Advise the Board on policy matters. | 4.8 | 5.0 | +0.2 |
| *6 | Carry the main responsibility of putting the Board's decisions into effect. | 4.8 | 5.0 | +0.2 |
| 19 | Participate in professional negotiations as the representative of the School Board, negotiating with teacher representatives on behalf of the Board. | 4.3 | 3.8 | -0.5 |

Item 26 (**) is considered a major change -- the only major change in this subsection. The medium and large boards tended to agree while the smaller ones tended to disagree that the superintendent should "assume full responsibility on all professional

matters . . . without seeking prior approval of the Board." The difference in response patterns may well have been on the issue of "seeking prior approval of the Board." As indicated in Chapter Four, two unsolicited questionnaire write-ins made reference to board "policy." According to interviews, the developing of board policy is more advanced or has taken on a higher profile in the larger boards. Presumably, if a board policy were in place regarding these matters, then there would be no need to consult the board on a particular item, and the superintendents would be free to "assume full responsibility on all professional matters."

Items 20, 1, 2, 5, and 6 (*) were items for which there was generally quite strong support in 1971, but that strong support had increased to unanimity (items 5 and 6) or near-unanimity (items 20, 1, and 2) by 1993.

In this section, the only item which received a notably lower rating than in 1971 was item 19: "participate in professional negotiations as the representative of the School Board, negotiating with teacher representatives on behalf of the Board." In 1971, a superintendent was serving as president of the NTA. It is likely that the increased militancy of teachers (at least three teacher strikes have occurred in the Province since 1971) has influenced superintendents who are not signatories to the teachers' *Collective Agreement*, to try to distance themselves from labour negotiations between the Government Treasury Board, the Schools Boards, and the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. The overall lower rating of this item occurred in spite of a slightly higher rating in the central region of the province.

***Improving educational opportunity***. Table 5-2 which follows presents the nine out of 24 possible questionnaire items which experienced a significant change in importance as a role component/descriptor in the area of "improving educational opportunity," as indicated by mathematical means of responses. In the more than 22 years between surveys, four of the items in this section have experienced a "major" change in importance -- three of them downgraded.

Table 5-2

**Changes from 1971 to 1993 (Educational Opportunity)**

| Item | Role component/descriptor | Mathematical means | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1971 | 1993 | diff. |
| **51 | Retain the authority to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations. | 2.8 | 3.6 | **+0.8** |
| 29 | Consider his primary responsibility to be the maintenance of the highest quality of instruction. | 4.2 | 4.8 | +0.6 |
| 47 | Make an annual report to the School Board and to the Department of Education on the educational program in his schools. | 4.1 | 4.6 | +0.5 |
| 33 | Develop, with the co-operation of the staff, criteria for the selection of teachers. | 4.4 | 3.9 | -0.5 |
| 31 | Direct the development of programs for the school grades. | 4.1 | 3.5 | -0.6 |
| 34 | Initiate and direct curriculum studies within his own system. | 4.3 | 3.6 | -0.7 |
| **32 | Organize staff activities for upgrading the curriculum. | 3.9 | 3.1 | **-0.8** |
| **35 | Conduct research concerning educational problems of the school and community. | 4.5 | 3.7 | **-0.8** |
| **43 | Direct the preparation of curriculum materials and the selection of textbooks, workbooks, teaching aids, and classroom supplies. | 3.5 | 2.6 | **-0.9** |

Item 51 constituted the only major increase in importance in this sub-section. Increasing from a "possible to "probable" role component/descriptor, is the superintendent's "authority to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations." It is interesting that it was the eastern school boards which rated this item highest -- a response pattern noticeable in items 43 and 49 as well. Because the larger boards in the province tend to be located in the east, one might theorize that this was an issue of greater importance to larger boards, but only in the case of item 49 -- "The

Superintendent determines which school a pupil shall attend" -- does the response pattern by board size seem to support this theory.

Regarding item 51, over the past three or four years, the eastern superintendents have collaborated on the preparation of a broadly focused study of the impact of "behaviorally at-risk students" on the educational system. The findings of this study have been urged upon government, but the resultant increase in their own awareness of the magnitude of these issues may have impacted their thinking in regard to "the authority to expel students" or at least the need to "retain" that authority.

Items 31 - 35, and 43 all relate to the area of curriculum -- development and improvement. Over the quarter century, the Department has gradually expanded and assumed more responsibility for the curriculum. The majority of curriculum initiatives originate with or at least are orchestrated by the Department. The advent of curriculum co-ordinators at the board level has helped to increase uniformity across the province, and encouraged some curriculum initiatives at the local level, but these facts help to explain a perceived decrease in importance of specific curriculum functions within the role of the superintendent. That is not to say that the superintendency has no responsibility in curriculum, merely a noteworthy lessening of responsibility -- indicated by the mean of responses in the present survey at 3.56, compared to 4.24 in the earlier survey.

Item 43 constituted a major downward change, in the area of "direct(ing) the preparation of curriculum materials and the selection of textbooks, workbooks, teaching aids, and classroom supplies." Although superintendents are still involved in the area of curriculum generally, there was considerable consensus, that the selecting and preparation of teaching materials was not directly within their domain.

***Obtaining and developing personnel.*** In the area of obtaining and developing personnel, table 5-3 which follows presents the nine out of 25 possible questionnaire items which experienced a significant change in importance as a role component/-descriptor. As indicated by mathematical means of responses, four of the items in this section have experienced "major" change -- three increasing and one decreasing in importance.

Table 5-3

**Changes from 1971 to 1993 (Personnel)**

| Item | Role component/descriptor | Mathematical means | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1971 | 1993 | diff. |
| **76 | The Superintendent accepts full responsibility for the decisions of his subordinates. | 3.0 | 4.2 | **+1.2** |
| **60 | The Superintendent handles teacher grievances. | 3.1 | 4.4 | **+1.2** |
| **62 | The Superintendent presides over grievance committees. | 3.0 | 4.1 | **+1.1** |
| 56 | Recommend for suspension or dismissal a teacher or principal whose service does not meet his expectations or those of his supervisory staff. | 4.1 | 4.6 | +0.5 |
| 53 | Recommend to the Board the appointment of non-professional employees on the basis of their qualifications for particular services. | 3.9 | 3.4 | -0.5 |
| 61 | He and the Board handle teacher grievances. | 3.4 | 2.9 | -0.5 |
| 70 | Develop and keep a confidential file on his professional employees. | 3.6 | 3.0 | -0.6 |
| 69 | Make an annual report to the Board concerning each member of the teaching staff. | 2.4 | 1.7 | -0.7 |
| **57 | Participate in professional negotiations as a third party, serving as a resource both to the teachers and to the Board. | 3.4 | 2.6 | **-0.8** |

The 1971 responses to items 76, 60, and 62 indicate lack of clarity in the minds of superintendents at that time, or at least lack of consensus among them, as to whether or not they had a role to play in these areas. The increase in emphasis on "the Superintendent accept(ing) full responsibility for the decisions of his subordinates" is in harmony with the general clarification of his role as leader, and with the shift from "superintendent to superintendency" -- in particular the concept of team leader associated with it. With reference to increased responsibility in the area of teacher grievances (items 60 and 62), the Newfoundland Teachers' Association has become much more

aggressive during the quarter century, a Collective Agreement has been in effect with them since 1972, and that document has clarified the superintendent's role in these matters.

Item 53, mandating the superintendent to "recommend to the Board the appointment of non-professional employees on the basis of their qualifications for particular services" has been downgraded in importance. Most superintendents now have business managers, and the area of non-professional staffing is generally delegated to them. Although non-professional staffing remains a part of the responsibility of the superintendency, the downgrading of the importance of this responsibility reflects that superintendents are less directly involved with it. Similarly, items 61, 70, and 69 have all been downgraded because superintendents take less direct responsibility in these areas. The practice of (item 69) "mak(ing) an annual report to the Board concerning each member of the teaching staff," if it was ever established in Newfoundland has been abandoned. At present, boards would only get involved where serious problems developed.

Item 57 -- "participate in professional negotiations as a third party, serving as a resource both to the teachers and to the Board," is similar to item 19 and has also been downgraded similarly for similar reasons.

The break-down of response means by board size and by geographic region (see Appendix B) presents some interesting contrasts, and raises some interesting questions which the present study has been unable to answer. The breakdown by religious denomination, however, presents a contrast deserving of comment. Regarding items 68, and 75, when compared to his Integrated counterpart, a Roman Catholic superintendent was much more likely both to "give consideration to local values or feelings regarding race, religion, national origin, in filling vacant teaching positions" (4.0 vs 2.9); and to "consider the personal life and attributes of his subordinates in his evaluation of their merit" (4.3 vs 2.7). However, at the same time, he was much less likely to "develop and keep a confidential file on his professional employees" (item 70) (2.2 vs 3.3).

***Providing and maintaining funds and facilities***. In the area of "providing and maintaining funds and facilities, table 5-4 which follows lists the seven out of twenty possible questionnaire items which experienced a significant change in importance as a

role component/descriptor. As indicated by mathematical means of responses, four of the items in this section have experienced "major" change -- three increasing and one decreasing in importance.

**Table 5-4**

**Changes from 1971 to 1993 (Funds/Facilities)**

| Item | Role component/descriptor | Mathematical means | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1971 | 1993 | diff. |
| **77 | Assume final and over-all authority over the business and financial affairs of the school system. | 3.0 | 4.3 | **+1.3** |
| **78 | Be responsible for expenditures authorized in the budget. | 3.0 | 4.2 | **+1.2** |
| **86 | Sign cheques on behalf of the Board. | 1.9 | 3.1 | **+1.2** |
| 80 | Establish a budget committee to help him in drafting the annual budget. | 3.8 | 4.5 | +0.7 |
| 92 | Inspect all school buildings in the course of construction to ensure that they are being built in accordance with plans, specifications and contracts. | 3.0 | 3.6 | +0.6 |
| 95 | Provide the Board with lists and specifications of school furniture, equipment, teaching materials, and supplies. | 3.5 | 3.0 | -0.5 |
| **79 | Approve orders for supplies and equipment. | 3.9 | 2.4 | **-1.5** |

Item 77 mandating the superintendent to "assume final and over-all authority over the business and financial affairs of the school system" experienced the greatest upward change of any item in the survey -- 1.3 increment units. Probably three factors have combined to produce such a major change: (a) The position of superintendent was still quite new in Newfoundland in 1971, and many incumbents were still "feeling their way into" the role, and learning just what was their overall responsibility, (b) The general lack of unanimity regarding this item resulted in a relatively low mean which allowed for a significant increase within the limits of the rating scale, and (c) in the shift from

superintendent to superintendency, present superintendents tend to delegate or download many specific duties while assuming greater overall responsibility in curriculum, in business operations, in personnel, or whatever. Item 78 requiring the superintendent to be "responsible for expenditures authorized in the budget" would likely owe its major increase in importance to the same factors (except "b").

A bit of a contradiction is suggested by item 86 -- "sign cheques on behalf of the Board." While present superintendents are delegating most of the business/clerical functions to others on the superintendency team, they have increased the importance they attach to their duty to sign cheques. The explanation lies not as much in the increase as it does in where the duty was actually rated. In 1971, signing cheques was something superintendents generally did NOT do. The 1971 mathematical mean of 1.9 indicated that they generally "disagreed" that they should sign cheques. The 1993 mathematical mean of 3.1 is really "undecided," if they now believe that they have that right, they probably do not generally exercise it.

The major downward change of item 79, "approv(ing) orders for supplies and equipment," is an indicator of the degree to which superintendents have actually delegated the business and clerical responsibilities associated with the day to day operations of the board. This has been corroborated by interview data reported later in this chapter.

***Maintaining effective community relations***. Following is table 5-5 which presents the six out of eighteen possible questionnaire items which experienced a significant change in importance as a role component/descriptor in the area of "maintaining effective community relations." As indicated by mathematical means of responses, three of the items in this section have experienced "major" downward change in importance -- item 104 tying with item 79 from the previous section for the greatest numerical change in means over the quarter century. (Both item 104 and item 79 were downgraded by 1.5 increment units.)

Table 5-5

**Changes from 1971 to 1993 (Community Relations)**

| Item | Role component/descriptor | Mathematical means | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1971 | 1993 | diff. |
| 107 | Keep his office open to community members at all times. | 3.7 | 4.3 | +0.6 |
| *97 | Communicate to the public the Board's policies and enlist the public's support for the Board's program. | 4.4 | 4.7 | +0.3 |
| 112 | "Play up to" influential local citizens. | 2.0 | 1.5 | -0.5 |
| **102 | Assist in the co-ordination of school and community activities. | 4.3 | 3.5 | **-0.8** |
| **103 | Take an active part in the activities of parent-teacher associations. | 3.8 | 2.7 | **-1.1** |
| **104 | Maintain active membership in the teachers' professional association. | 3.7 | 2.2 | **-1.5** |

There was strong agreement that item 97, essentially taken directly out of the Schools Act, has increased slightly in importance, becoming a "vital" component/-descriptor.

At first glance it appears surprising that only two of the eighteen role component/descriptors in this section have increased in importance since 1971, while four have decreased. Interview data to be presented later in this chapter indicate that for the majority of superintendents, public and community relations consume a significant portion of their time, and receive a major emphasis. The answer appears to lie in what specifically is encompassed in community relations. At present, the media is the focus of much of the attention in this area, and only one questionnaire item mentioned the media -- item 105 -- "establish regular channels of communication with local media." It was rated at 4.3, a "probable component," in 1971 and at 4.5, a "vital component," in the present study. The shift from superintendent to superintendency which has seen many routine functions particularly below the board level delegated, combined with the increased attention given to the media has caused certain other public relations activities

to pale in comparison. In a general sense this explains why many of the component/descriptors have been ranked lower than previously.

There was general agreement that a superintendent in 1993 would NOT "maintain active membership in the teachers' professional association." With the emergence of a teachers' union and collective bargaining, item 104 has been downgraded to an "improbable" role component/descriptor. The break-down by school board size indicates that in the large boards, it was most unlikely, as was item 103 -- "take an active part in the activities of parent-teacher associations."

***Section Summary***. Because of the fact that the study was conducted on a population and based on survey comparisons, it was not possible to identify statistically significant changes over time, but based on an arbitrary cut off point in the ranking of differences in mathematical means between 1972 and 1993, major changes were noted.

In superintendents' responses to eight questionnaire items, major increases were noted in their importance as role component/descriptors: item 77 (+1.3); items 60, 76, 78, and 86 (+1.2); item 62 (+1.1); and items 26 and 51 (+0.8). Items 77, 78, and 86 all relate to increased responsibility of superintendents in the business and financial areas of running their schools. Item 76 appears to indicate that superintendents see their present role as more all-encompassing, and are now involved more in delegation of responsibility than formerly; and item 26 is similar except that it was noted that superintendents now have policies which allow them to assume professional responsibilities without consulting boards on individual specific issues. Items 60 and 62 indicate an increase in responsibility for handling teacher grievances. And finally, item 51 indicates that in spite of lack of any legal mandate to do so, superintendents believe that they should retain the right to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations.

Major decreases were noted in the importance of another eight questionnaire items as role component/descriptors: items 79 and 104 (-1.5); item 103 (-1.1); item 43 (-0.9); and items 32, 35, 57, and 102 (-0.8). The greatest downward rating was for items 79 and 104 -- indicating that superintendents are much less involved in approving orders for supplies and equipment, and much less likely to be members of a teachers' professional organization; and in fact, on both of these areas they are unlikely to be involved. Items

102 and 103 suggest that superintendents are less likely to be involved in school level public relations activities. Similarly, items 32, 35, and 43 all refer to school level duties which are important, but have generally been delegated to lower administrative levels, and superintendents therefore take less direct responsibility for them. Regarding item 57, as superintendents have had to assume greater responsibility for handling teacher grievances, they understandably have had to distance themselves from professional negotiations involving the teachers' "union".

### *Interview Findings*

The interview findings regarding the nature of changes in the role of the superintendent of education in Newfoundland are presented in six major sections -- the setting, and the five areas of responsibility given in the Specific Conceptual Framework: superintendent - school board relations, improving educational opportunity, obtaining and developing personnel, providing and maintaining funds and facilities, and maintaining effective community relations.

#### *Role Setting*

The interviews added a number of details which served to broaden the background of present Newfoundland education as summarized from the literature in Chapters One and Two. In addition, several interviewees made comments regarding the superintendent as a person. These are presented in this section.

***The Newfoundland context.*** Although there was no question in the interview schedule which specifically dealt with the pre- and post-1969 Newfoundland context, eight of fourteen superintendents interviewed made comments which were of such a nature to be included in this section. One interviewee turned his thoughts back to confederation in 1949, evaluating the general progress of education in the Province:

> It wasn't really until 1949 when we came into confederation . . . only 45 years ago, that we really got into educating people. It wasn't until we became part of Canada that we really got into sitting down and seriously thinking about: "What are we going to do about our kids?." . .
>
> Well, we've made tremendous catch-ups since 1969. But we're nowhere close to where we should be. But the reason we're behind, in my opinion, can't be blamed on the denominational system, and it can't be

> blamed on the school system. It has to be blamed to a large extent on our *history* -- when we started. . . . Ontario started educating people years and years and years and years ago -- Newfoundland didn't.

The contrast implied is between teaching classes or subjects, and teaching students (people). He referred to 1969 as the beginning of a significant improvement in education. And although 1969 was the date of the new Schools Act, this interviewee and the others indicate that that year was more the climax of a period of change than a specific point of change. For example, several superintendents commented on the reduction in the overall number of school boards in the province. The hundreds of school boards had been somewhat reduced in number by amalgamations prior to 1969, the re-structuring of 1969 caused a drastic reduction, and the resulting number has been further reduced by consolidations since that date.

Four superintendents mentioned the superintendents before 1969 -- the superintendents for each of the recognized churches. These individuals worked out of the Department of Education, and were characterized as "authoritarian," "autocratic," and "accountable directly to the Department of Education." Their role was so different from the present role, that one interviewee stated flatly, "Here we had no superintendents up till 1970." Explaining just what those earlier superintendents were like, another interviewee elaborated:

> The superintendents, of course prior to 1969 were purely denominational superintendents. At the Department of Education there was the United Church Superintendent, the Anglican Superintendent, the Salvation Army Superintendent, and the Roman Catholic Superintendent . . . they were denominational superintendents, and they were the arm of education.
>
> In fact, they handled the whole thing. They were perhaps a little more autocratic than the present superintendents we have now, because the superintendents we have now [are] dealing with their school boards -- they're just serving their school boards. But the superintendent at the Department of Education, well, they were in charge. . . . Whatever the superintendent said of that denomination, that's what went.

He went on to further contrast the superintendent of by-gone years with the present superintendent. "Now the other superintendent, the one that I came into in 1969 then, was a superintendent of a school board." Two other superintendents commented on the political dimension of the new superintendent's role. "Now, in the first few years of the

reorganization, say, from, 1969 to 1975 or so, thereabouts, there was a wrestling of control from the local level into the central offices around the provinces, and that was an interesting political battle." The second spoke about the new incumbents in their first years having "no culture, no models upon which to build," and no background in the superintendency. The dynamics of the changes are captured in his statement:

> So, a changing role therefore -- most principals in 1972 were the same principals who were there in 1968 prior to the establishment of school district offices. Each principal was used to running his or her own show. Each school was in effect an independent school with its own school board, so that the local principal was used to doing many of the things that a superintendent would do -- hiring teachers, hiring janitors, hiring secretaries, worrying about payrolls and reports and the shape of the building, and maintenance programs, etc. etc. etc.
>
> And the principals were used to dealing directly with the school board. Principals would call up the chairman of the board. There was a board for each parish as it were. And all of a sudden you now had a secretariat between the school and the board. Principals weren't used to that. And neither was the board, of course. Now they had this 'something' in between. Neither group was used to dealing with this secretariat, . . . [and] the idea of having to justify to another professional one's course of actions, and the board having to step back from the day to day administration left a lot of room for tensions and conflict.

The interviews indicated that prior to 1969, administrative positions at the Department of Education included superintendents, assistant superintendents and supervisors ("of the old inspectorial type"). Generally programming was prescribed by the Department, but left to the local schools or their boards. In addition, at the local level, there were principals of a single school, and supervising principals whose responsibility was for more than one school. After restructuring in 1969 the superintendent became a local board appointee, as did the assistants in the few cases where they actually existed. The local boards also appointed supervisors -- but from the perspective of the present, the terms become somewhat confusing, possibly because there wasn't total consistency among all boards as their administrative structure evolved. Here is how one superintendent attempted to clarify the various post-1969 terms. (The italicized sentences are the researcher's questions):

> I went into school board administration in '69 as a board supervisor. Now that is not a co-ordinator, and it's not a supervisor, it is somewhat like an assistant superintendent to a degree. . . .
>
> The ones that got phased out [as the Warren Commission was being implemented] were the supervising inspectors.
>
> In '69, '68, all the boards -- the charter boards we'd call them -- were given superintendents, and basically in their second year in '69 they were allowed to have so many board supervisors. There were two or three boards that had assistant superintendents, but I believe they had to be up around 7,000 students at that time to have an assistant, so the board supervisor generally did a lot of curriculum work and a lot of administration, and then between that and '75 they put in what we call specialists -- they were still called supervisors. But you had religious education specialists, art specialists, language arts specialists, and so on, and it was a gradual gradual build up.
>
> *Were there program co-ordinators at the board at that time?*
>
> No. They were called supervisors.
>
> *Were they what evolved into program co-ordinators?*
>
> Yes. They evolved into that. Some positions evolved into assistant superintendents because these people were all called supervisors. One was generally designated as the "board supervisor." He was sort of a generalist somewhat like an assistant superintendent, and the rest of the supervisors -- some people called them "specialists," but technically they were "supervisors" -- they had specific parts of the curriculum to look after.

Two additional interview comments identified two forces which impacted the role of the superintendent early in the quarter century under study. The first related to the Denominational Education Councils which were created in the post-Warren Commission re-structuring. One of the younger superintendents surmised:

> The objective of the government was probably to move the churches out of education at the time [in 1969]. But the objective wasn't realized because the churches . . . moved out as Denominational Education Councils. So some of the role of the former superintendents was taken over by the DECs. And their role was to look after church interests in education.

The second comment came from one of the original 1969 cohort of superintendents, who spoke about the first teachers' strike. He said: "the first Collective Agreement -- that

was one of the things that came out of the strike. . . . The strike was 1971 . . . the first Collective Agreement was signed the next year in 1972."

***The superintendent as a person.*** Six of the superintendents interviewed made comments of a personal nature, expressing how they felt in relation to changes, both experienced and anticipated. During the pilot study, the superintendent of a large mostly-urban board brought up the issue, suggesting that the uncertainty resulting from the push toward restructuring, combined with increased demands upon the system parallelled by dwindling resources gave cause to some to question the value placed upon their services as system leader. They were expected to lead, but there was nowhere to lead, and very limited capacity to lead even if one believed he could see a desirable direction to go. A superintendent who had recently retired stated "the last three years I was working, I never saw a raise. My cheque went down." Although he was able to understand the economic realities which compelled government restraint, he added: "it doesn't help the morale, does it? The economic conditions have changed the morale of the people -- the morale of teachers, the morale of all educators."

The uncertainty surrounding future employment was a major concern for two. One had lived all of his life in the community in which he served as superintendent, he had given up teaching seniority to become a superintendent, and with anticipated mergers among boards, he expected to have to leave his home, possibly even the Province in search of employment. In his words: "There is a personal concern. . . . In my own situation, I don't know if I am going to have a job after July 1st. I don't know if I'm going to have to sell my house after living [here] ever since I was born. I was born [here] . . . and worked [here] since I came out of university. My first job was [here], so since 1970 I've been here. . . ."

When asked about a possible morale problem among superintendents, a senior superintendent replied: "Not me. You know, St. Benedict was asked: 'What would you do if you were told that you were about to die?' And his response was: 'I would continue to do whatever I was doing.' That's what we should do. Continue to do whatever we are doing, I mean any other alternative is insanity."

The superintendent of a small board, although not intimidated, was awed by the wide ranging skills required to be an effective superintendent.

> Skills in technology obviously would be one of them. You're expected to be an architect, you're expected to be some kind of a financial expert, to be familiar with audit procedures and so on. A lot of us were never trained to be professional in these kinds of skills. . . .
>
> To some extent, you're required to be a politician sometimes, a legal expert. You got to be familiar with a lot of the educational issues. . . . But there are more issues to-day in education than there ever were.

His colleague from another small board used the word "frustration" in connection with a similar list. In his words: "I mean it's almost impossible for me to be an expert in the area of computer technology, and expert in the area of resource based learning, co-operative education, business management, budgeting and financing, and so on."

Another frustration was voiced by a superintendent from a medium sized Roman Catholic school board: "I used to have my desk clear at one time, but there is no way now that I could possibly read everything that goes over my desk. . . . and you get a *guilt complex* if you don't get it moving." Also providing another look at the personal side of administration, this superintendent spoke of his reaction to being in a down-sizing mode. He stated: "Expansion, you know -- we were just designed for expansion, I suppose. But when you went to decline it's a more painful situation in terms of trying to make decisions about whether you continue to operate a school or not. It's much more difficult."

***Section Summary.*** The year 1969 was the focal point of a period of major change and restructuring. General improvement in education coincided with the restructuring effort, but in the interviews, no one commented on a possible cause-effect relationship between the two. The year saw the creation of many new consolidated and/or integrated school boards, three new Denominational Education Councils, and a new "breed" of superintendent with an entirely new role as a school board appointee. In the following years, these changes were succeeded by further consolidations, the signing of a Collective Agreement with teachers, and the appointment of additional board office staff. Between the school level and the Department level, the re-structuring in effect created a new administrative level in which the superintendents began to develop their new role -- producing some interesting dynamics of change.

And change continued throughout the quarter century after 1969, producing significant pressures and varied personal responses among incumbent superintendents -- feelings ranging from frustration or perplexity in the face of spiralling and diverging expectations and skills requirements, to guilt over inability to do and be everything which might be desirable as a superintendent, to low morale as a result of economic and organizational uncertainties.

***Superintendent-school board relations***

The findings regarding changes in the role of the Newfoundland Superintendent of Education which related to the topic of superintendent-school board relations were further grouped into five sub-topics: (a) the superintendent as a leader, (b) characterization of a "typical" board member, (c) decision making, (d) policy development, and (e) accountability of the superintendent.

***The superintendent as a leader.*** Ten out of fourteen interviewees spoke about the leadership role of the superintendent -- three of them extensively. A number talked about the ambiguous relationship which existed between boards and their superintendents, and superintendents and their principals in 1969 and the years immediately following. It was not distrust, just lack of any experience to produce trust. In the words of one:

> I would say that in 1969 a lot of boards didn't understand the role of the superintendent. . . . They believed . . . that the superintendent in some fashion was a creature of the Department of Education, so therefore they were leery. A lot of principals were too. They still regarded [the superintendent] as working for the Department. As far as principals were concerned, they had to work for somebody, whether it was the Department or the Board, it was probably not too different.
>
> But board members in the very early stages felt that the superintendent was a creature of the Department. So they were loathe to share their secrets and concerns and so on. [But] once the boards realized that the superintendent was their person, things straightened out pretty quickly.

The uncertainty of roles and relationships in those early years prompted the following comment from a Roman Catholic superintendent who was actually a teacher at the time of the reorganization in 1969, but became a principal a couple of years later. He spoke of ambiguities and uncertainties as "the results of the fact that there was no history of a district office in Newfoundland prior to the [Warren] Royal Commission":

> Prior to that there were 250 school boards in the province, each of which was essentially run by the local clergy. So there was no district administration. Therefore in the educational culture of Newfoundland there was nothing for superintendents to rely upon when they were appointed in 1972. None of them to my knowledge had any experience at a district office elsewhere in Canada. There were no district offices in Newfoundland, so obviously no opportunities there. . . . No models. No personal experience.
>
> And the result was in my opinion, that they *followed*, rather than led [their school boards].

Another Roman Catholic superintendent who spent the entire quarter century at board office believed that "some of [the superintendents] had to learn their roles . . . but a goodly number of them were well educated, and they knew the educational theory behind superintendency and everything else." He stated:

> The first thing they had to do was to try to explain their role to the schools, especially principals -- *especially principals*. Principals weren't used to answering the same way [as they now do].
>
> They had to explain their role to board members. A lot of board members had worked on a community basis . . . and they weren't used to planning as such. . . . [For example, if] a certain community would need a new school . . . now all of a sudden you've got to come in and you have to get the board's permission/financing, and you've got to go through the planning process with the board, whereas this hadn't been there before.
>
> So, I suppose there may have been a little bit of resentment there in that respect.

He further spoke of how, over the years, board members "have become trained . . . more sophisticated, more knowledgeable, more interested." And several of his colleagues joined him in attributing partial credit to superintendents collectively for the new type of board member which has evolved over the quarter century. This superintendent talked of working through personnel committees early in his mandate, and of "encouraging the board members to get more and more involved in matters dealing with curriculum, and other matters too." Several superintendents talked of their role in providing information to the board to create a sound basis for informed decision making (see "Decision Making," Chapter Four).

There was general consensus that early in the 1970s, superintendents emerged as unchallenged, and potentially authoritarian/autocratic leaders. When asked if there was a time in Newfoundland where a superintendent could be viewed as almost autonomous and never really challenged by the pressures from within his own constituency, one superintendent responded:

> It went to the point where in a large measure, parents, given their level of education and the ethics in which they were reared -- particularly the ethic of respect for people in prominent positions, for example respect for the minister, respect for premiers, general respect for politicians, then -- there was a cultural inheritance in Newfoundland that most of the citizens felt whereby people in authority in a large measure were given certain impunities, and could feel certain securities in making decisions without being overly concerned with being overtly or blatantly or aggressively challenged by those people who had this cultural inheritance in Newfoundland.

The resultant disengagement of the general public from the complexities of the educational enterprise was initially reflected in the quality and measure of participation of board members themselves in the process of administering the school district. Thus superintendents emerged as virtually unchallenged leaders of their districts in those early years -- a role which they were loathe to perpetuate.

There was considerable agreement that their efforts fostering active participation in the democratic process, informed decision making, and member "ownership" of the educational enterprise constitute a major factor in the evolution of a new generation of school board member. There was also strong agreement that the new "modus operandi" of school board members in general is one of the factors which has served to make the present task of the superintendent more difficult -- more cumbersome, but possibly more effective. Ironically, their own success has made their work more difficult to manage. According to a senior superintendent some board members believe superintendents have become too powerful, and may actually attempt to pre-empt their role. He spoke of that difficulty, noting that "there is always that desire of board members or a board of directors having a desire to become hands on. That's inevitably true in education I find."

Regarding the superintendent as leader, one superintendent summed it up as two main roles -- "the chief executive officer of the board, and the professional advisor. That's the two main roles he plays." Another developed a mental framework of differing

relationships -- "the relationship between superintendent and the school board, . . . the relationship between the superintendent and the public generally, . . . the relationship between the superintendent and board office staff and principals, . . . and the relationship between the superintendent and students. A third summed up his concept of leadership this way:

> In my opinion, leadership involves primarily looking "around the bend." Everybody can see "to the bend." . . . Trying to look "around," trying to look "over the horizon," trying to surmise what's there, and then trying to prepare people for that -- that's an essential ingredient of leadership. The "vision" is the current word.

He went on to explain how in order to develop this "vision" he must have reliable relevant information, and how the "vision" would influence the planning for facilities and programs. According to him, when a district knows where it is, and where it wants to be three to five years from now, "that's when you start to get into the philosophy and the policy making of the district."

There was strong consensus that many pressures exist to take superintendents away from their primary role as educational leader. An Integrated and a Roman Catholic superintendent made comments very similar to each other. They agreed that in the early part of the quarter century superintendents worked closer to the level of program delivery in a role much more recognizable as educational leadership than was the case ten or twelve years later. The Integrated superintendent stated:

> When I started out in 1969 . . . I had a vision for my role, and my role would be educational leader in the district -- to set directions and the various processes that you go through. And I guess to a large degree that has been the case. . . . I thought being an education leader would place me in contact with all of our personnel to a fair degree. And that was true the first few years. I had considerable contact. . . . But as time went on that began to change. . . .
>
> In summary, what I'm saying -- finances have taken up more of my time than I would have liked it to have taken up, recognizing that it is a major issue, and must require some of your time, and . . . the changes in the demands made through various types of legislation, and perhaps . . . a third thing . . . people have a heightened awareness of their rights.

The words of the other superintendent comprise a brief of the evolution of the educational leadership of superintendents over the quarter century. He adopted the delegation of responsibility as a component of leadership. He summarized as follows:

> In terms of my own position, I've seen that change from it being a job that allowed [me] to exercise a leadership role to a great extent in the early years, to one that . . . moved into more of a management role because of the higher and higher expectations. . . . [Finally] I felt that as a superintendent, I came to a crisis where I could no longer exercise leadership, and I found myself falling into just a managerial kind of role where I didn't think it served the district well.
>
> Now, in the last number of years I'm finding ways to empower people that are in other administrative positions below me -- empower them to do the things that perhaps I would have been doing in the past . . . in order for me as a superintendent to try to exercise . . . leadership.

Throughout the quarter century, leadership by superintendents began somewhat uncertainly during the first two or three years, as incumbents developed confidence, and expectations were clarified by experience. Superintendents worked more closely with teachers and schools than they do at present, occupying a potentially authoritarian role, but encouraging board participation in policy and decision making. Greater board involvement, necessary efforts in resource procurement and management, increasing legislative constraints, and a heightened awareness of human rights combined to distance these superintendents from the classroom and reduce their role to more of a manager. Superintendents to-day struggle with the tension between the managerial demands of their role, and their aspirations to maintain genuine educational leadership of their districts. In the opinion of at least some, the emphasis upon educational leadership is again gaining the ascendency. One incumbent, among those with the shortest tenures in the interview population, in comparing a superintendent of even four or five years ago with one of to-day, stated:

> I see a different superintendent even in that short period of time. I saw superintendents for example even 4 or 5 years ago who were a lot more concerned about roofing or windows, or whether a classroom should have carpet or tile; than whether or not a school should have a computer lab, and what type of computer should go in this lab. . . . I see a superintendent now that's a lot more involved in the kinds of issues that we talked about [in our meetings] to-day, like challenging needs children. I see a superintendent now that's involved a lot more . . . [in] curriculum issues.

***Characterization of a "typical" board member.*** Eleven out of fourteen interviewees made comments concerning changes in the characterization of a "typical" board member over the quarter century. In this area of findings, there was total unanimity regarding changes in the general level of sophistication of board members, in their level of educational attainment, in their desire for involvement, in the nature of expectations they held for the system, and in the level of accountability they demanded of all agents within the system. It was not possible to be definitive regarding whether the changes observed in board members were a cause or a result of other changes within the system, or whether they were simply parallel changes possibly resulting from common causes. In fact, there were elements of cause, effect, and co-incidence among the various comments.

One superintendent stated:

> I think in those days [25 years ago] school boards or elected trustees would take the advice of the superintendent. Probably they would leave a lot of the development of policy, a lot of the operational strategic decisions to the superintendent, whereas to-day I feel that school boards tend to take the superintendent's advice, weigh it, and make their own decision. . . .
>
> Twenty-five years ago, I think they did what the superintendent told them to do. . . .
>
> Now I sense in our school board officials and elected trustees a desire to look to be much more assertive and much more involved in the actual direction of the school district.

Commenting upon the general lack of accountability of the superintendent to the board in those earlier years, one of the longest-serving superintendents made the following statement, tracing the evolution as he saw it over a quarter century:

> The boards in '69, while they had some very good people on them . . . weren't used in Newfoundland to being board members. . . . They didn't understand their role. So what I saw happen from '69 on, . . . a lot of boards just rubber stamped whatever the superintendent said. It was a simple as that.
>
> Now what's happened, and this didn't come about too fast either, but certainly since 1980 -- that's about where I'd put the mark in, and yet it's a continuum -- I've found that boards have become very much more knowledgable. Board members know issues now. When you start talking about problems with mainstreaming, when you start talking about

> mathematics and different levels of mathematics, and different things like this, written programs, they have become much more knowledgeable.
>
> But I've had boards since '69, and very often you could go in and just tell them something. You really didn't have to prepare all that much -- I mean you *did*, but you didn't *have* to. They'd accept what you were saying most of the time. Very seldom would they ask any relevant questions about things. Well, that's changed. The board members have . . . an expertise. . . . They've become more sophisticated, more knowledgeable, more interested, too. That's the thing that I've found, especially in this past five years. They've become educated.

A second veteran of the entire time period made very similar statements, but stressed that the lack of direct involvement was not due to lack of dedication:

> I find that boards in recent years have been more aware of the broader needs of the district, and have a desire to get involved more in the decision process than at the earlier stages. And that's not to say that is placing a value on that at all, because in my involvement in the beginning of this job in '69 . . . we had very dedicated people. People volunteered their services, and we'd meet into the wee hours of the morning quite often at board meetings to make certain decisions. . . .

One of the more junior superintendents contrasted the types of decisions in which board members involved themselves earlier with later in the study time period. His words reflect succinctly the general sentiments of all eleven superintendents whose comments were included in this section:

> I can remember sitting around the board table as a guest say 15 years ago as a supervisor or program co-ordinator at that time, and the kind of business that went on around the board table was approving payment of the invoices. All the invoices were brought to the board table, and a lot of time was taken up dealing with the payment of the bills. . . .
>
> I think [that we have a more sophisticated board member, on the average than we had 15 years ago] -- that [previously] they felt important dealing with approving invoices or expenditure or that kind of thing, or saying yes, we will put a new chimney in a particular school, or we will put carpet or tile in a particular classroom, or we'll put on a new roof. . . .
>
> [Now] you'll get one or two board members having expectations for the district having a vision or mission, because they are business people perhaps and have probably been away to seminars where they have come up with a vision for their hotel or motel or their particular car dealership, and they're saying: "What's our vision, what's our mission. . . ?" It only takes one or two board members on a board to know about these

> kinds of things to pressure staff . . . into considering these kinds of things. . . .
>
> What I'm saying is that board members are talking the same kind of language that we are in terms of strategic planning and that kind of thing. And you wouldn't get that kind of discussion around a board table 20 years ago.

Only three superintendents presented the negative side of the increasing involvement of board members. One spoke of the tendency to become "hands on," one suggested that they "get under your feet at times," and the third said that from where he sat, they were at times a "little too much involved." And yet there was general agreement that the new genre of board member boded well for the future of education in the Province. The minor inconveniences (with the resultant tensions) of board members occasionally crossing the line from policy making to policy implementation, for example, were definitely outweighed by the greater advantage of having decisions and policies well thought out from a number of perspectives before they were formalized.

Superintendents themselves have played a role in the sophistication of board members. Several spoke of encouraging members to participate in committees. A couple spoke of bringing of curriculum specialists or program co-ordinators reports to the board, and at least two spoke negatively about the older way with boards saying, "You're the expert, you run it," because they themselves wanted the help well-functioning boards were able to provide in the decision making process.

Two additional comments indicate the general level of educational attainment of board members -- the first from a rural board, and the second from a large urban one:

> By quality [of board member] I mean . . . the formal education level . . . of your board member has increased. So to-day we're ending up with [board members in] rural communities like the public health nurse, the social workers, people who work with the Fisheries Department [biologists], people who seem to have a greater formal education, this is what I am saying. That's improved the quality of your board.

And the second stated:

> We've got people on this board who are university professors with good backgrounds in curriculum. We've got people on the board who work with community colleges -- they're lawyers, they're doctors, they're business people and they have become much more sophisticated about the whole educational process, and consequently are much more involved now

in decision making with respect to curriculum than they've ever been before.

***Decision making.*** The new generation of school board members discussed in the previous sub-section has been noted as a major change in the Province within the past quarter century. This change appears to have been a major force influencing the decision making processes of superintendents. Eleven superintendents made comments which were classified under the "decision making" sub-heading. Collectively, they described a decision making process which is more cumbersome, which involves many more levels or stages, which includes many more stakeholders or interest groups, but which in the final result produces a better quality decision -- a usually superior basis for action.

Illustrating changes in the decision making process, a Roman Catholic superintendent graphically contrasted the closure of a school in 1985 with the closure of another school in the same community only a few years later. Regarding the first closure decision, he stated simply:

> In 1985, to close a school, and to re-organize the city, . . . the board met on a Saturday morning and made the decision. The superintendent made his report, and three hours later the board had decided to close two schools. Motion passed, and everything. Within 18 months [or] two years, the board did not make its decision within three hours. It became a long and involved process.
>
> [There had been] a change in the nature of the public. The board in 1985, when it met on a Saturday morning was not cognizant of the change that had taken place. The board up to this time had not closed a school -- or when it used to close a school, the parish priest used to walk in, or the superintendent used to walk in and in effect say, "This school is closed." The board in 1985 was still operating that way, but the hullabaloo was considerable because when the board announced its decision -- I mean there was *tremendous* conflict.

In the process of making the decision to close another school just a few years later, the same superintendent spoke of the board's not accepting a recommendation from the Denominational Education Council, and in another instance of their not accepting a recommendation from himself. When his intentions became public knowledge, there ensued demonstrations, sit-ins, and some personal abuse from the community. When the board finally understood the necessity of accepting his recommendation, a process of lobbying among themselves, and of consultation with their constituent stake-holders

allowed them to take ownership of the decision, rather than follow the "old advise and consent ritual." The superintendent summarized:

> So it was not decided at the board table. The mere fact that I said that that's the best way to go didn't mean that that was going to be *the* way to go. . . .
>
> You have to go out and negotiate. You have to negotiate with everybody. You have to negotiate with the Department, you have to negotiate with the NLSTA [Newfoundland and Labrador School Trustees Association], you have to negotiate with the association of Roman Catholic School Boards, you have to negotiate with the Catholic Education Council, you have negotiate with the NLTA [Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association], you have to negotiate with your school principals, you have to negotiate with your assistants, with your program co-ordinators, with your PTA's. . . . And it's all around the circle. Now contrast that with 1972, right?

A number of superintendents mentioned their role in encouraging board involvement in decision making. One stated: "The first committee I set up (when I became superintendent in the mid-1970s) was a staffing committee." A second stated that "in our school district, we have very functioning local school committees at every one of our schools," and that their development and functioning were encouraged by administration. A third mentioned that part of the change came about as boards shifted from being appointed, to being elected. He indicated that elected members felt more accountable to their constituents, and therefore had to be more aware of the issues underlying at least major policy decisions. And a fourth superintendent mentioned the present political reality "because people are very much aware of what their rights are."

Several superintendents mentioned that in the early part of the quarter century, a lot of decisions were made by individuals and went virtually unchallenged. One went so far as to say that as the pattern of decision making changed, those superintendents that did not change with it "went on to other things" -- i.e. they ceased to be superintendents.

A somewhat different view of the new reality of decision making was presented by one. When asked if he were speaking about "collaborative decision making" he said: "No, sir." He subsequently explained:

> There are some decisions that do not have to be made, do not have to be processed. They are axiomatic. And I'll give you an example. If indeed there are management parameters, if indeed there is a particular manage-

> ment style, if indeed there is a particular governance system in place, you have to understand that part of the legal/philosophical/ social/moral mandate of that organization can in a large measure be operationalized by the exercise of the veto power, and in those occasions when a group finds itself disorientated, and wants to further develop an orientation contrary to essentially what we've narrowly defined as the legal mandate of the organization, a veto power in a large measure is the decision. It effects the decision, and collaborative decision making doesn't have application to all decisions that can be made within an organization.
>
> If one looks at collaborative decision making: for the most part the kinds of behaviours involved in the organization and the people within it as it moves towards effecting a decision is one in which there is some democratic sense of participation, discussion, and dialogue; however that doesn't necessarily mean that the participation in the decision making has to be culminated in the group making the decision. Unfortunately, those who discuss and deal with collaborative decision making, . . . confuse their making of the decision in the group process [with] participating and putting input into those people who have the sole prerogative of making the decision. . .
>
> Basically, decision making to me doesn't have labels.

However, this superintendent did finally acknowledge that whatever the process,

> There's a greater acceptance and realization of the necessity to at least accommodate the set of politicals that surround the decision making process and impact upon the organization. There is a realization that the organization, if it doesn't respond to those set of external pressures better than in the period of the '70s that . . . the pressures will eventually disfunction [the] organization.

It was the superintendent of a large urban school board who most succinctly summarized the change that had occurred in the decision making process over the quarter century. He agreed with the others in his evaluation of the effectiveness of the newer process. He stated:

> The hierarchical structure of decision making in a school district is changing, and we're no longer top down. We're much more collegial, we're much more collaborative, and we have to involve more people in our decision making, whereas years ago the superintendent called the shot, and that was it. And it was a more militaristic -- or more authoritative kind of model. . . .
>
> To-day that's not the case. Nobody says that the superintendent doesn't have the power. Yes, you have your power and you have your authority, and you have your responsibility. But, in 1993 you have to work with people, and you have to set up a collegial collaborative kind of process

> . . . and you realize that the more people you bring into play and involve in decisions, the stronger and the more prudent and the sounder the decisions are going to be at the end of the day. Whereas, 25 years ago, I believe decisions were made by one or two people. . . .

***Policy development.*** Five superintendents made comments regarding policy development. One of them noted the shift towards written board policy in the following statement:

> In my reading of the minutes [of the early part of the quarter century], and of the sub-committee minutes, the board seemed to focus essentially upon finances and buildings. There were relatively few references to educational matters. . . .
>
> I guess about 1980 it seemed there was a turn towards policy making, but it wasn't until about 1985 . . . that a policy manual was developed.

Another commented on his personal involvement in policy development:

> Very few school boards in this province up until a few years ago had policy manuals. They didn't exist. The policies that existed existed in the minds of the superintendents. This is what I call (I refer back to my studies in Greek and Latin) it was an "oral tradition" -- that the superintendent had everything in his mind. . . .
>
> But it's only been of late that policies have actually been written down and articulated.
>
> As a result of my studying [at a university out of province] in 1983, 84, 85 . . . I developed a policy manual for my school board -- that was only a working document; and we came back and we used it to develop policy for the board.

One superintendent commented that writing policy is now one of the roles of the superintendent. He personally did not draft all the policies, but oversaw the process while a second superintendent stated categorically that he personally drafted all policies. He went on to cite the range of new topics for which policies were required:

> And more and more where policies are demanding that never were in existence before . . . accountability in areas like of child abuse procedures, crisis management procedures, sexual harassment procedures, strike management. All of these are impacting the role of the CEO much more than they did a few years ago.

Another superintendent expressed the personal wish that he not have to sit down and draft policies regarding the installation of condom machines in schools. He also

pointed out that because of an increasingly complex legal framework, it was difficult to draft acceptable and appropriate policies:

> You've got to have skills in policy development, writing the right policy so that you are not in conflict with the regulations and policies of other agencies -- the Department of Education for instance -- and being able to write policies that are not in conflict with the law. . . . [I] draft them, and then it's run through a number of committees.

He went on to comment that some of the existing policies in his board required revision. "I can see policies in our policy manual now that need to be updated because they are in conflict with the Education Act. . . . I can see that the old language is not acceptable in today's atmosphere."

One of the most insightful comments came from the superintendent of one of the largest boards in the province. He pointed out that correct legal process of policy preparation must be followed.

> Since I came to this board and I looked at the policy manual that existed right here, all the policy manual consisted of was minutes or motions passed by the board. But the law of the land in the School's Act says that no policy is a policy, no by-law is a by-law in Newfoundland, unless it has been discussed by a minimum of two school board meetings. I couldn't find one single motion that was discussed or any policy that the board had that was discussed in two school board meetings. It didn't exist in 1989 in [one of the largest] school board[s] in the whole province.
>
> And I had to go through all that process then. And I had to get parents involved, I had to get board members involved, I had to get teachers involved, and co-ordinators involved; so that they got some ownership in the policies that were being developed. Now that's a major change there. You see that "policies" previous to 1969 and even for some time after 1969 were really only sometimes a motion passed by the board, or a memo sent out by the superintendent. . . .
>
> And it's only now we're getting policy manuals in this province.

***Accountability of the superintendent.*** Comments from seven superintendents were classified under this sub-heading. In a composite picture, these seven interviewees felt accountable to the Department, to parents, to teachers, to school administrators, to school boards, and to various groups of stakeholders. They were held accountable for decisions relating to staffing, for budgeting and finance, for adhering to building codes, for student retention and/or drop outs, and for system performance suggested by

indicators such as public examination and CTBS results. In the words of the superintendent of a large mostly-urban board:

> I have to answer the questions here [in our school board] as to whether or not our kids are at national average or not at national average, or whether we've got a lot of drop outs, or whether we've got violence in our schools. . . . My school board members ask me that.
> They're demanding answers.

A second superintendent, one from a small mostly-rural school district who was speaking from notes prepared in advance of the interview, commented:

> Another big category [of changes] of course is accountability. Scarce dollars. Now everybody wants to know exactly what you're doing with every cent. . . . You're more responsible now for every dollar you spend because the Department of Education is block funding a lot of areas and you just get the money to spend for whatever it costs to operate.
>
> Responsible for budgeting. Responsible for overruns and juggling funds around so that you can meet certain requirements.
>
> Drop outs. Being accountable for the numbers of students that are not going to stick with the system and stay with the school, you've got to answer to that, and whether or not the programs there are attractive enough to keep students in the school.

Indicative of the level of accountability is the comment of a third superintendent from a medium-sized mostly-rural board:

> Right now my school board demands accountability. Accountability not only from the point of view of budgeting and finance, but they demand education accountability. They actually get involved in for example what were the public exam results like in a particular school. And if the public exam results weren't good. . . .
>
> If right now, students don't do well on that particular measure, that will come to my board meeting, and my school board trustees will hold me accountable for the results to a point where not only do they want me to give them the results each year, but they want the results analyzed each year, and they want us to be able to explain to them exactly why they're not as good in one school as another, why in certain subject areas students did well and in other subject areas they didn't, even to a point where if it can't be explained in any other way, and if it's a personnel problem they expect us to go in and do something about that particular teacher, especially if it continues over a year, or two or three years.

***Section Summary.*** Superintendents spoke extensively about the changes in superintendent - school board relations. The earliest part of the quarter century under

study was a time period of searching for role identity both on the part of superintendents and board members. The re-structuring of the system in 1969 really created new positions and consequently a new network of relationships among board members, superintendents, principals, etc. Hence, the lack of role clarity and the lack of previous district administration in the province produced a period of uncertainty, a time where board members more often than not were occupied with "waiting on tables" rather than in real educational issues. Superintendents emerged rather early in the quarter century, very much in control of their boards, as potentially authoritarian leaders.

Partially as a result of experience, partially as a result of societal trends in general, and partially as a result of the encouragement of superintendents and the success of the educational enterprise as a whole, board members gradually became more sophisticated, became more involved in the administration process, and assumed greater responsibility for the actions of the board. Boards changed gradually from committees too often merely "rubber stamping" recommendations to powerful bodies taking ownership of the educational process and holding their superintendents accountable for their decisions and actions. Individual members presently make it their business to understand educational issues to a degree which is both a help and at times an encumbrance to the superintendent.

And along with changes in relationship between superintendents and their boards, the process of decision making has changed. In order to continue to lead, superintendents must now exercise care to ascertain that they are in fact leading in a manner or direction which their boards will follow.

***Improving Educational Opportunity***

The findings of the study regarding changes in the role of the Newfoundland Superintendent of Education which related to the improving of educational opportunity were further sub-categorized into six sub-topics as follows: (a) access for the handicapped; (b) special education and individualization -- the implications of making provision for the slow learner, for enrichment, and for the young offender; (c) breadth of curriculum; (d) student retention and the addition of Grade 12; (e) the genesis of the assistant superintendent; and (f) the creation of the program co-ordinator.

***Access for the handicapped.*** The comments of the majority of superintendents relating to this topic tended to focus more on the requirement to provide access for the handicapped as a force producing changes rather than on the changes themselves. As a consequence, the comments of only three superintendents have been grouped in this sub-section, but a major sub-section of the following chapter deals with the closely related issue of human rights and access for the handicapped as forces producing changes.

This unanticipated finding of the study appears to be the result of two factors: (a) the semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed superintendents considerable freedom to shape their responses to suit the issues as they viewed them, and (b) although superintendents' comments indicated that human rights was a major force producing change, in the area of access for the handicapped at least, it appeared that most had already accepted it as a new reality, a new normality, and less deserving of comment than many of the other problems created by the human rights movement. There were a number of suggestions which indicated that the sympathies of superintendents were in favor of the handicapped, and that they welcomed societal pressures to provide for the handicapped because that was what these superintendents really desired to do in any case. For example, the superintendent of a large urban board mentioned that a number of his assistant superintendents had actually assumed an advocacy role on behalf of disadvantaged students in his board. "There has been major change -- a major change. There is a greater advocacy right now in my opinion by the superintendency -- superintendent and assistant superintendents -- for students who have problems. I know in this board right here there is a major advocacy by the assistant superintendents."

The other two superintendents whose comments have been included in this sub-section were from mostly-rural boards -- the one small, and the other medium in size. The latter hinted at a possible third reason why few superintendents focused directly on the changes. There were changes, but the resources had been provided to effect the changes:

> The government through IEC and so on has been fairly generous with regard to handicapped students, physically disabled students, and teachers for that matter, in allowing grants for elevators and ramps. . . . Most of our schools are wheelchair accessible at this particular point in time.

The superintendent from the small mostly-rural board stated: "Accessibility was not a big issue say ten years ago, but accessibility now is a big issue." He later described some of the changes, and how once the services are available, more students take advantage of them, and how that has impacted his role:

> And another thing here is the increase in special needs students. That's become a pressure item -- just the past 4 or 5 years with special education classes. When I became superintendent students just went to special education classes because they were screened and . . . now the issue as far as me being involved . . . more and more: special students are being integrated and that's causing frustrations for the teacher who are not prepared to accept special education students in their classes for part or the whole of the day. We've got student assistants. We've got students in schools that have to be fed through tubes and whatever else -- they're in wheelchairs, they're in various stages of physical distress and so on. A lot of these students obviously were never in our system five or six years ago. So there's particular pressures and problems and responsibilities there that the superintendent's got to deal with, with his program staff -- special services personnel and the principals.

***Special education (individualization).*** Included in this sub-section are comments indicating role changes as they relate to providing for the slow learner, for enrichment needs, and for young offenders. With only two exceptions, one of them from the early pilot study phase of the study, all superintendents made comments regarding role changes in reference to special education. There was total unanimity regarding the importance of these changes, and also unanimity regarding many of the resultant frustrations of attempting to provide for more diversified needs with what were generally viewed as dwindling resources. Typical of a number of respondents' comments is the following from one with nearly twenty years in the superintendent's chair:

> In '69, education was basically the same for everybody . . . [although] there was a bit of streaming going on in big schools. And I think the biggest change is trying to meet the individual needs of a student right now. Back then you looked at it more as a block. . . . There was basically only one program. We only had one reader. . . .
>
> I can remember the first year I was teaching. I taught grade nine, ten, and eleven. All high school examinations. I remember one old lady in the community I taught said to me: "Are you meeting the individual needs of your students?" . . . I said "I have about 40 students, and I have three grades, and I have ten subjects in each grade. . ." I said, "I can barely cover what's required."

> Well I think that that's probably one of the things that superintendents have become much more involved in, and that is in meeting the individual needs of students -- different programs, accessibility, mainstreaming, any of the things on the go.

Most of the superintendents spoke of the wide range of special needs children which now require programming within the regular school system. One itemized:

> For example, behaviorally disturbed students, challenging needs students, students who are deaf, students who are blind, students that are Down's Syndrome, students that are ADD -- and it's true that there was a time when a lot of these were institutionalized in one form or another, and we didn't have to deal with them at schools, and we didn't have to deal with them as superintendents.

Other superintendents added to that list "young offenders," "autistic children," and "gifted students," all of whom together with the previous list according to one interviewee "shall" be provided for by boards. He referenced the change from "may" to "shall" in the duties of school boards reflected in the revisions to the Schools Act (consolidated 1990) as they relate to providing "special education classes." [Section 13(p) in essence became 11(b), re-located under "A school board shall. . ."]

Although five of the superintendents responding in this sub-section mentioned additional help in terms of personnel specifically made available to boards to help cope with the added demands of programming for special needs students, there was unanimity among them that the additional resources provided in reference to this need were not commensurate with the increased responsibility. Typical of the general view is the comment of the superintendent whose list was cited above:

> The problem with it though is -- first of all we accepted all of these into our schools with open arms and open hearts, and they became part of the school system. And then we had to open our classroom doors and invite them into our classrooms. The problem that happened there is we didn't get enough resources, especially human resources, even in number to support this. Secondly we didn't get enough financial resources to support this.

Several superintendents pointed out that as special needs children were moved into the classrooms of the Province, two difficulties were encountered. First, was the difficulty for the teachers themselves, because for the most part neither they nor their superintendents were trained or prepared to deal with these special needs. Boards had

to develop strategies of coping, and in-service training for the affected teachers. And second was the difficulty for the regular students in the affected classrooms. In the words of the superintendent quoted in the two previous major quotation blocks:

> Probably the worst of all is, if you really expect that a teacher in a classroom with 28 other students and a conglomeration of all these special needs children is expected to be all things to all people that are coming into that classroom, and meet the demands of all those parents who have a bona fide argument that they should be integrated or included, I think we didn't properly prepare teachers for this. They weren't properly educated or trained to handle these children. As a result we've come up with a lot of classroom management type problems, the greater masses of students have suffered in a number of ways, not just academically, and we've got a real serious problem not only in intermediate and senior high school, but in kindergarten right on through the whole system.

However, none of the superintendents so much as hinted that they would prefer to see special needs students again placed out of the regular school system as a means of reducing either problems, costs, or demands upon themselves as administrators. The closest thing to that came from the veteran superintendent of a central island board who mentioned that for efficiency purposes, in his board some 20 to 25 very special needs students were accommodated in just two centres. He along with many others expressed a degree of personal pride in the accomplishments of his board in providing for special needs. Another superintendent spoke with pride of the service provided to parents of special needs children -- parents who really needed the support and relief of having their special needs or handicapped child provided for at least part of the time. Another declared that separation and institutionalization of the handicapped was "immoral" in his opinion. And another expressed pride in his board's leadership in programming for the "gifted." And all this was in spite of their total agreement that the new emphasis on the mainstreaming of special needs children had brought with it a tremendous increase in demands upon them as administrators -- an increase which constituted a major role change.

One superintendent summed up the changes and the new role in the following words:

> And the superintendent, of course, plays a role in seeing that those specific needs [are met] -- identifying where the needs are, and then

making sure that his or her staff address themselves to the particular needs within the limitations of the board.

> [This is a new responsibility that just wasn't there in 1969], because many of the special needs like the Exon House and many of the government institutions that had handicapped students, a lot of them remained in those institutions. But I believe it was the Peckford Government, I'm subject to correction on that, decided to decentralize or move all these students from a centralized area like St. John's or Corner Brook and send them out to their specific communities all over Newfoundland and Labrador. Therefore, the onus of responsibility rested on the shoulders of the school board . . . and the superintendent.

It is in the area of "seeing that those specific needs are met," that the superintendent's role has changed. Superintendents spoke of a problem solving role, as many related problems were placed "on their desks" to deal with. They spoke of struggling to secure resources and resource personnel, and of collaborating with their assistants and support staff in search of solutions to problems. They spoke of spending major amounts of time -- in some cases "disproportionate" amounts of time, either personally, or as a superintendency team. The superintendent of one of the largest boards in the province summed the changes in role as they relate to special education in the following quotation:

> I think if we went back to 1969, to 1968, the early 70's; children with specific learning disabilities were often excluded; children with behaviour problems were often excluded; children with serious socio-economic variables that were interfering with their access to the system. . . .
>
> To-day we're trying to serve everybody, whereas some years ago the idea was, well if you come to school, you're here, you're coming in on our terms, you're going to take our curriculum and we're going to educate you. Whereas now . . . the emphasis is more that we have to make the system suit your specific personal need. And that's our challenge, whereas one time you fit the system, now we make the system fit you.

***Breadth of curriculum.*** Eight of the fourteen interviewees made comments which were categorized in this sub-section. Contrasting the earlier part of the quarter century with its latter part, one commented:

> Years ago, there seemed to be more growth . . . we had more pupils. The idea was get them in schools, move them through grade eleven, grade twelve, and out into the work force. . . . To-day, I think education is becoming much more on target trying to find ways and means to help Johnny, or Suzie, or Davey, or Mike reach his unique personal potential.

Collectively, they spoke of changes and/or new programs (a) in entrepreneurial courses; (b) in partnerships with business such as enterprise and co-operative education; (c) in increased offerings in laboratory-based courses such as home economics, industrial education, and the sciences (biology, physics, chemistry); (d) in greater availability of physical education courses; (e) in locally developed courses; (f) in computer education; and (g) in French immersion as a parallel curriculum. At least three made reference to the child-centred curriculum. In the words of the most articulate of these three:

> I think there has been a change around to the child-centred curriculum. Years ago I don't think the curriculum was very child-centred. I think it was a rote kind of education where things were memorized and regurgitated into examinations; and students passed examinations with very high marks and didn't know very much. But now I think that has changed. I think there is more conceptual learning going on now and students are internalizing things much better.
>
> The theme approach to education [has been] a big thing -- particularly in the primary and the elementary grades where teachers centred things around the theme approach, and got students involved in a discussion process, in a problem solving process, where . . . before that they were just mimicking things out of books and getting tested on it.

He went on to speak of journal writing and computerization as big changes, and then made the following statement with its implications for administration and the superintendent's role:

> A child centred curriculum will not work unless you have the proper teacher in the proper place. Your traditional teacher with the child-centred [curriculum] they just don't click. . . . Some of the younger teachers coming out of university full of vim and vigour . . . you'll find them out on the beaches picking up kittle, out picking up leaves. All the things they bring to the classroom, the experiences they bring into the classroom to their students, and their students are out there with them on field trips.
>
> These never happened years ago. Now it's happening and the child is involved and they're doing their own experimenting. One time you never heard of a lab until you got into a high school and got into Physics and Chemistry and all that. Now they're in a lab situation all the time. The classroom is a lab. The classroom is a hub of activity. Like the resource centre in schools. . . .
>
> And the resource centre has changed the schools a lot. Because children go there to research -- I don't mean high school -- primary students they go there to research, they go to find things, to look up things on their

> own, and that is what education is all about. When you start to learn on your own, and the teacher perhaps being a guide more than a "passer-out of facts and knowledge."

Regarding the change in the role of the superintendent related to the area of the broadening/changing curriculum, the superintendent of a small western board stated: "Over the past several years it seems like a lot of the responsibility for curriculum development has been passed from the Department of Education down to the board . . . and to some extent it seems like the Department wants a lot of it back again." A Roman Catholic superintendent commented that he has been able in recent years to act as a change agent, providing leadership in his board in setting directions for curriculum development. A second Roman Catholic superintendent related: "I find that . . . over the past ten or fifteen years there have been significant changes in various areas of curriculum initiated by the Department, and . . . there has been some pressure on superintendents to see that those changes are translated out into the classroom situation."

The major impact on the role of the superintendent appears to have been two-fold: (a) in staffing -- overcoming the inertia of what one superintendent called "very small 'c' conservative teachers" who were "very slow to change," and providing the "proper teacher in the proper place;" and (b) in resourcing -- providing the teaching resources and facilities for a host of new offerings which require specialized equipment and environments such as gymnasia; and laboratories for science, computer, and manual and fine arts.

***The addition of grade 12 and student retention.*** Although the addition of grade twelve to the high school program in Newfoundland occurred over three or four years approximately in the middle of the quarter century under study, and although the majority of the study's interviewees would have been superintendents during this implementation period, only one of them actually commented on it. And he downplayed the significance of needing additional staff or facilities stating rather:

> I think what it did for me, it forced a new look at schools, and I think that the "Type A" objectives that were built in at that time were looking to get feed back on the affective domain, if you like, rather than all cognitive things. . . .
>
> School climate was what it was talking about, and for me, I look back now and say: "It forced us to think about things that we were doing.

> Why were we time tabling the way that we were. Why did we slot teachers in the way that we did? What kind of change did the teachers have to undergo to fit into this new program which had other choices in there, and some choices which said to some people, or should have said: 'You know, I'm going to have to spruce up my teaching to make my course more attractive so that youngsters will register in that.'"

The issue of student retention has also required taking another look at schools. Superintendents feel a responsibility for the sake of their students to try to keep them in school. This is often accomplished in the face of intimidating odds. In the words of one:

> Through drop out prevention, for example, and through guidance services and so on, we have a lot more students graduating from school now than we did years ago. Students that are kept in school with behavior problems. The development of good individual education programs for these students, plus educational therapy services for these students, will not only keep them in school, but would give them what I would call "viable" education.

Another superintendent provided an inter-provincial statistical comparison, and then contrasted the province's former graduation rates with those of the present:

> The drop out rate is 36% in Quebec, almost the same in British Columbia now. It used to be extremely high here in Newfoundland. The kids who got to grade 11 were the cream of the crop.

This same superintendent later commented ironically that technology had taken away some of our students' optimism, because it was gradually removing job opportunities in the primary industries. Another spoke of his own son going on to university and pursuing a business degree. He couldn't choose *not* to do it "because he was not going to get a job" (anyway). However, many others become discouraged. For many there seems little reason to stay in school. The historian-superintendent added a different perspective to the generally low morale in the province:

> I think our social problems in Newfoundland and Labrador are caused jointly by the federal government and provincial government [which have] created a terrible disease in society. This initiative or this work ethic or independence that Newfoundlanders have had for centuries, as hard working men and women from dawn to dusk has been eroded. We're killing the work ethic.
>
> You have young men and young women who are receiving all these social benefits -- for example from the fisheries is the typical one, the ENCARP

> program or the "package" as we call it in Newfoundland and Labrador, the unemployment insurance. The young of rural communities -- terrible social disease of people -- alcohol is becoming a terrible problem. . . .
>
> So you have a lot of youth clubbing and drinking all evening, sleeping in all day, and then going to the post office and collecting their unemployment cheques and "package" cheques. So they have no incentive to work or to move.

The "killing of the work ethic" along with many related social problems has translated into problems which affect the role of the superintendent. In response to the question: "How has that impacted the role of the superintendent?," this individual summarized:

> Well, you have a lot of social problems. Attendance of students, that's a big problem in the school. Here's how it impacts upon the superintendent: You have these problems in the homes and in certain communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. It's impacting upon the students in the school system, attendance at school, for example. A lot of missing of days, a lot of disincentives to continue on in the school because there's no hope of employment around and parents and guardians are the role models, and the kids say: "What's the benefit of school? You know, you can end up in this situation and make a living at it. . . ."
>
> Problems. Yes. Especially in the school retention problem -- trying to encourage students to stay in school.

***Genesis of the assistant superintendent.*** Exactly one-half of the superintendents interviewed made comments regarding the effect which the evolution and "coming on stream" of the assistant superintendent position had upon their roles.

In the early part of the quarter century, depending upon size, boards had supervisors -- a position carried over from before the restructuring just after the Warren Commission Report about 1969. Three interviewees mentioned this fact. Of these three, one from an integrated board stated: "We just called them supervisor. And they were doing really what the program co-ordinator is [presently] doing." In contrast, the superintendent of a similarly-sized Roman Catholic board suggested that some supervisor positions evolved into assistant superintendent positions:

> [These specialists] evolved into [program co-ordinators. But] some [supervisor] positions evolved into assistant superintendents because these people were all called supervisors. One was generally designated as the "board supervisor." He was sort of a generalist somewhat like an assistant superintendent, and the rest of the supervisors -- some people

> called them "specialists," but technically they were "supervisors" -- they had specific parts of the curriculum to look after.

The third superintendent in this group, speaking about the situation in one of the largest boards in the province contrasted the supervisors with the one assistant superintendent which they had up to about 1980. At this time, only the very largest boards had assistant superintendents. He said: "Prior to 1980 at this board office, there was one superintendent, one deputy superintendent, and there were about four supervisors." Along with several other superintendents whose comments have been grouped in this sub-section, he noted the gradual increase in the number of board office staff until just the last few years.

Four interviewees identified specific role tasks which their boards associated with assistant superintendents. Collectively these include: hiring of teachers, teacher evaluation, curriculum, operations and personnel, and special services. It is interesting that these are sub-roles of the superintendent, and the gradual growth of board office staff approximately parallels the gradual shift from superintendent to superintendency discussed in Chapter Four.

Superintendents talked about role changes as they related to increased demands for communication skills, and as they related to development of new procedures among a widening circle of office staff. For instance, relating to the hiring of teachers, one stated:

> [Now] the superintendent would spend time on the actual reviewing of applications and the interviewing, and things of that nature. The recommendations are made to the superintendent, in my case, from the assistants and the principal. And they've done the initial screening. And I simply ensure that they follow the policy properly and then make the final decision. . . .

It was the superintendent of one of the largest boards in the province who was most articulate in his description of changes in roles and relationships which resulted from the increase of central office staff -- both the assistant superintendents and program co-ordinators:

> As a result of the Crocker-Riggs report written in 1980, that's when we got the number of assistant superintendents we now have . . . and the . . . program co-ordinators. Now the relationship had to change then because

once that happened, that meant that there were more board office people going out into the schools. . . .

Previous to that there was only one-third of the number of people at board office. So the relationship that [had] existed between the superintendent and the board office and the principals was one whereby really the principals ran their schools just about in total isolation from board office other than the fact that board office would give them a memo here and there and every now and then. But once you got this big staff at board office, there was a greater monitoring process beginning to take place. Schools came under more scrutiny. There was more consistency expected. . . .

What started happening to a greater extent then was the board office was gathering more information about the schools, so you saw greater comparisons going on between the schools which didn't occur before. . . . Competitiveness resulted from that.

Previous to 1980 when these assistant superintendents and program co-ordinators came on the scene, our system was organized in what is called school systems. And you had each high school with a group of feeder schools, and that principal of that high school was called the "supervising principal" . . . and he or she would come to a meeting with the superintendent, whereas in 1980 when we got assistant superintendents all of that system went out, and each of the assistant superintendents were given so many schools to be responsible for.

So you now had board office personnel going out and working with schools and coming back and reporting, as opposed to the supervising principal reporting on his own . . . schools. And in some cases there was animosity built up against board office because it was perceived that board office were now taking autonomy away . . . from the local schools.

Now in 1994, the attitude is that board office has got to be cut back again, and put more autonomy back to the [school level] -- so within the 25 year period we have seen major shifts . . . two or three shifts.

***Creation of the program co-ordinator.*** Because the position of program co-ordinator came into use in most boards in the Province just one year later than the position or assistant superintendent, it was apparent that in the thinking of most of the superintendents interviewed many of the role changes that resulted were attributed to the general increase in office personnel and probably not specifically identifiable as a result of the introduction of either specific position. However, two of the five superintendents whose comments have been categorized under this sub-heading made an important distinction between the two positions. They said emphatically that the co-ordinators have

no "line authority." In the words of one: "I see the co-ordinators as curriculum people that happen to be in the board office, in most cases as far as where they operate from as a base; but for all intents and purposes they could be in a building somewhere else or in a school somewhere else, or wherever." This he contrasted with the recognized line of authority: board - superintendent - assistant-superintendent - principal - and teacher.

One of the recently-retired superintendents described the area of programming and curriculum articulation prior to the advent of the curriculum co-ordinator in words such as "meagre," "something missing," and "hit and miss." Another superintendent indicated that some curriculum work had been done by the two supervisors which he had had prior to 1980 or 1981. Perhaps the most insightful comment came from his Roman Catholic colleague who suggested a reason why even though some supervisors had been appointed in board offices prior to 1980, their successes were limited. In his words:

> I know at that time [1980] the board office was certainly small, very small. At one time it only amounted to about three people. But as we have come along there assistant superintendents came along, and then program co-ordinators. So the office itself has sort of grown considerably. . . . In terms of curriculum expectations, they have broadened quite a bit since that time. . . . [We are offering more courses], and there are quite a lot more things happening in curriculum.
>
> I think the curriculum people came along probably a bit prematurely. They came along before the curriculum came, and as a result maybe the actual definition of curriculum people and what they should be doing in terms of working with teaching personnel and changing their methodology -- . . . that that really wasn't in vogue. It's only something that seems to be now being realized to the extent it should have been.

***Section summary.*** Regarding changes in their role as it relates to responsibility for "improving educational opportunity" superintendents agreed that major changes have occurred since 1969. A great emphasis is now placed on programming for the needs of individual groups of students -- "physical handicapped," "mentally handicapped," "multiple handicapped," "slow learners," "emotionally disturbed," and young offenders. The result is a growing collage of varied and often conflicting demands placed upon the system -- increasing demands which are perceived to have far outstripped any increase in resources provided to meet them. And yet all superintendents recognized their legal

mandate to provide for these needs, and in addition most recognized a moral responsibility as well.

A broadening curriculum has also been identified as a major change. Superintendents, through their boards must provide not only courses designed to meet the needs of specific sub-groups of student population in terms of their capabilities, but also in terms of personal interests and academic needs related to preparation for post-secondary study and/or future employment. They accept the challenge of administering schools and curricular programs in a manner designed to retain in school, students who in a previous generation would have dropped out.

These changes have presented difficulties to superintendents in terms of the volume of work and adjudicating among conflicting pressures. In addition, a major change has occurred in the size of staff at the school board office. It steadily increased for at least the first portion of the quarter century, and although that change helped to meet the personnel requirements requisite to carrying out the increased work load, it placed new demands upon superintendents in terms of required inter-personal skills and the development of new procedures to co-ordinate the new larger "organism" into which their board offices have grown.

### *Obtaining and Developing Personnel*

The findings of the study regarding changes in the role of the Newfoundland Superintendent which related to obtaining and developing personnel have been grouped into five sub-topics as follows: (a) staffing at board office, (b) time required for hiring staff, (c) difficulty in securing appropriate staff, (d) professional development, and (e) teacher welfare issues.

***Staffing at board office.*** This was an area of comment that had not been anticipated in the "specific conceptual framework" of the study, but as content analysis proceeded, comments of seven superintendents specific to board office personnel were eventually grouped under this sub-heading. Four made reference to the size of school board staff immediately after 1969. They variously described the reality as: "small, very small," "only three people, three persons," "very few people on staff," or "superintendent practically the only person at the school board level."

Among the comments in this sub-section there was no disagreement with the generalized perception of present inadequacy to meet the challenges of the educational system, as far as having sufficient leadership personnel. Four of these superintendents commented regarding the significant increase in board office staff over the years -- particularly in reference to assistant superintendents, program co-ordinators, and specialists such as speech pathologists and education psychologists. But there was strong consensus that the increase in personnel available to share the broadening leadership role was not sufficient to meet the increasing demands being placed on the system. Only one hinted that things were actually improving. Following are his words summarizing the quarter century, and speaking positively about having enough help to enable him to move back into a curriculum leadership role:

> I know at that time the board office was certainly small, very small. At one time it only amounted to about three people. But as we have come along there assistant superintendents came along, and then program co-ordinators. So the office itself has grown considerably. So in terms of the management office itself, it's certainly a lot larger. . . .
>
> I think what has happened is the Department itself got quite large. In my history as a superintendent the Department was not overly big at one time, but I think it has grown considerably through the 80s. And I felt every time there was a new person added at the Department level, there was more work at the school board level that had to be addressed, because there was more people in there making work for us. And as a result all these things either had to be taken on by myself or somebody else in the office. . . .
>
> And I see myself being able to move a little bit more so back into a [curriculum] leadership role again. Curriculum, in the whole district in terms of saying these are the directions we should take . . . and actually being able to have somebody who could help me do that.

This superintendent had found himself being pulled away from his role as educational leader by the demands of administration (otherwise referred to as "administrivia"), and had made a calculated decision to delegate some of these duties "down the ladder" in order to re-assume some educational leadership. His colleague from a much larger board said:

> It's a struggle to get involved in education learning matters, because I'm finding that the political dimension, the financial dimension, the manage-

ment dimension, of this particular role is sucking me away from matters of school leadership. . . .

He went on to make the following comment, the sentiments of which were generally shared by all superintendents:

> If Len Williams were to ask me what we needed more in education, I would say that I don't have sufficient leadership people, I don't have sufficient quality control people, at district level. We need more than assistant superintendents to look at the quality of this organization, and to make sure that we are performing as best we can. I've got principals out there that are being "blown out of the water" -- "blown out of the water" these guys. I don't know how they're doing it at the school level -- the demands are being made on their time, the phones, the discipline, the budgetary problems, the school organization. And they're so pulled that they are not able to focus on the quality of what's going on in the classroom.
>
> (*Pointing to a document on teacher professional development recently prepared by his staff*) This is aimed at the classroom, and our biggest problem is how we're going to make sure that our individuals have the time to do it. I think it's almost like . . . looking at the clock pendulum, and you're being mesmerized. The pendulum is going back and forth and back and forth, and everybody has forgotten the fact that the whole clock is in the back of a pick-up truck headed for hell. And you begin to lose sight, and I think that that fear is very real to the superintendency in Newfoundland to-day in the sense that we don't have time to really reflect, to look at the quality of our job, or of our work, or of our organization.

In a similar vein, another stated:

> As there are more and more responsibilities for a particular person [dealing with building codes, human rights issues, collective agreements] . . . the resource personnel or the help is just not there. You know, I could do with probably three assistant superintendents.
>
> We were using one. We had an allocation of two, weren't using two, were just at a time when I thought we probably should use the other one and we were reduced. They took the extra allocation away. So there are a lot of things that don't get done, there are other things that are put aside and just forgotten, and there are a lot of cases where you make a decision and hope you made it right, or you hope that the problem will go away -- sometimes it does, sometimes you bluff and you get by and some other times you are called to the carpet. There's more required, but the help is not there; and I think that this is becoming a big problem.

Understandably, superintendents attached great importance to the selection process of board office personnel. As he described the process which he used, one gave the following reason:

> When I make appointments especially to senior positions, I never operate with any other agenda than the one that's at hand. . . . All these positions are on a strictly competitive basis, and we spend quite a bit of time [putting persons] into key positions. . . . Basically, what I've said [is] you must assume responsibility for the decisions that your subordinates make. If you've given them the responsibility, you must make sure that they are reasonably competent.

***Time requirement for hiring staff.*** A total of seven comments were grouped under this sub-heading. In one of the earlier interviews, one superintendent spoke of going to Memorial University and interviewing students -- some far from their first degree. He and his "supervisor" would spend a couple of days, and hire many teachers on the spot. Their need was great, and if they didn't hire them, another district would. They could not afford to be too choosey, because they had positions to fill. What he described was a "sellers market" in staffing schools with teachers.

Three of the superintendents pointed out that early in the study period, professional staffing was a prerogative of the superintendent. Said one from a very large Integrated board: "There has been a change in this sense that I would suggest that in the early part of the quarter century . . . the superintendent basically appointed everybody who went into the system." His Roman Catholic colleague said: "From 1969 to 1975 I assisted my superintendent a lot in staffing, but essentially it was his area. I was a supervisor." Another, speaking from a third perspective stated: "Twenty years ago, [the superintendent] probably spent a significant amount of time [on the hiring of teachers] because he had to do it all by himself, in our case. But if you look at the superintendency as the superintendent plus the four assistants that I have with me, we probably spend equally as much or more time at hiring now as we did then." He went on to explain that in those earlier years, a great deal of time was spent in just finding the people with any sort of qualifications to fill positions, whereas now the job was time consuming because of the care required in the selection process.

The second superintendent quoted above indicated that when he became superintendent he did most of the staffing himself -- including interviewing. He said:

> Now, I generally had a . . . senior supervisor then. I'd have the senior supervisor do a lot of the leg work for me, but when the decisions were made, I basically made them. When I got an assistant in 1980, the nature of my work in staffing changed completely -- except for the [board] office, and perhaps once in a while, a principal where there might be a problem or whatever in a principalship. But most of the staffing is done by the assistant superintendent who reports to me. That I think is one of the biggest changes that I have seen in the job.

Six superintendents described the present process of hiring in terms of defining the position requirements, advertising for applicants, short listing candidates, and final candidate selection. Office staff, and usually principals, were involved in the process. Two Roman Catholic superintendents from boards differing in size by only 750 students took differing views regarding the involvement of principals in teacher selection. The first stated:

> Our principals are very highly involved in interviewing, in recruiting decisions. They do it as a team sometimes -- we send two principals off to do interviews, sometimes with the assistant superintendent, but principals are starting to make the decisions in that area, and make recommendations -- we may sign the contract for them, but they're doing a lot of the work in that area.

In contrast, the second had this to say:

> The way we do it, we advertise a position, and then when the applications come in we let the principals peruse them in co-operation with the assistant or the program co-ordinator and they recommend to us three or four possible candidates for interviewing. . . .
>
> The principal is not [part of the interview process]. . . . Our board has the process that the principal is involved in the narrowing down of the [field of] candidates, and . . . the superintendent and . . . two board members [do the interviews].

This superintendent pointed out that their board will often receive 20 to 30 applicants for a single position. Another located in the central region mentioned receiving 120 applications "from top quality people" for a sixth grade teaching position. This surplus of teachers has affected the hiring process. According to one interviewee, "The way it has changed is this, that now you have to be sure that you can justify [your decision] if questioned. Before, you very seldom if ever were questioned."

From the central region of the province, an Integrated superintendent summarized, adding the changing curriculum as another reason for greater attention to the selection of teaching staff in particular:

> There's an awful lot of time and consideration going into good selection now, whereas, at one time when we didn't have these people [assistant superintendents and program co-ordinators] at central office, we had to cut through a lot of this and go and put people in and risk that they'd turn out to be good people. . . .
>
> For one thing, 20 years ago I don't think the infrastructure was in place to [give the attention that we now do], and the other thing is one of the sure measures of successful teaching and to ensure good learning will take place is to have good teachers in the classroom.
>
> So, I think that the hiring of professional staff right now is a much more important issue than it was years ago. Besides that now, we need more experts. I mean the curriculum has changed now considerably from say 25 years ago to where it is now where you need especially at the high school level you need more experts in education . . . in subject areas.

Besides being able to give greater attention and care to professional staffing because of having the "infrastructure," the staff and resources to make it possible, superintendents generally agreed that they had to because (a) greater competition for positions meant they must be able to justify any appointments, (b) choosing the "best" teachers was a means of ensuring the "best" education in the classroom, and (c) specific new curricular demands require very specific professional capabilities on the part of teachers, and therefore teachers are not as readily interchangeable as they were 20 years ago. Although the field of candidates for any position is greater than at the beginning of the quarter century, and hence time is saved in looking for "bodies" to fill vacancies, this saving is more than offset by the additional time required to meet additional constraints placed on boards. Staffing now generally requires more time than it did, but the superintendency is also better equipped to devote the time required.

***Difficulty in securing appropriate staff.*** Eleven superintendents made comments which were categorized into this sub-section -- including all of the seven whose comments were referenced in the previous sub-section.

Similar to comments of the previous sub-section, six of the superintendents commenting in this sub-section mentioned the difficulties experienced in the early portion

of the quarter century in simply securing teachers to fill positions. These difficulties were noted in areas as geographically diverse as Labrador and the southern Avalon Peninsula. So difficult was it to secure even minimally qualified persons, that hiring practices were surprisingly lax. One noted: "When we started off first . . . as applications came in and we just looked at them, [and if] they were good applications sometimes we interviewed and sometimes we didn't." A second commented: "Twenty years ago whoever applied got hired because there was an extreme shortage of teachers. So if anybody had even one year of university, and some of them with none -- they just came out of grade eleven at the time -- they pretty well got into the classroom." A third, relating his experience recruiting teachers from Memorial University, stated: "Somebody with one year of university -- we'd hire quite a number of those -- and hire them very quickly without much checking backgrounds, because you knew there was somebody next door going to take them if we didn't." Speaking of Labrador in particular, another noted: "To recruit people for rural Newfoundland in those days was extremely difficult. To recruit qualified people was even more difficult. To recruit qualified and suitable people was practically impossible." A fifth spoke of a survey which he had conducted as a supervisor in his board just after re-organization: "I did a survey on the qualifications of teachers, and they basically came out to about an average of Grade I [on the certification scale] . . . and now it's up above Grade VI." (Grade I would represent about one year of university training after completing high school in grade eleven, and grade VI about six years. In addition, high school now includes grade twelve.)

Superintendents indicated that there was a concern for professional development and/or upgrading of teachers. The attractive increments between levels of pay related to each level of teacher certification still extant on the teachers' salary scale indicates that the Department also shared this concern. And nowhere was this concern more evident than as it related to specific specialized areas of the curriculum. Speaking from a large urban board, one superintendent stated:

> Twenty-five years ago we were looking for people with degrees. We were trying to get people who may have had a specialty in music or French or Industrial Arts, and saying well come into our schools and we will give you a temporary certification while you upgrade yourself professionally to . . . the status of a teacher.

Two other superintendents voiced concerns about the results of what they perceived as a university program preparing all generalist teachers. In the words of one: "They were all getting the same degree. They were coming out with the Bachelor of Education Degree -- not much background in-depth in the Arts program and so on. And so you had all generalist teachers, no specialist people." According to the other, this resulted in too many "English/Social Studies teachers" for example. Another superintendent noted that most of these teachers are still in the system, and particularly in those boards where downsizing of the system has become a year to year reality, this presents unique problems for the superintendent. Downsizing of staff requirements may be realized largely by attrition, but this creates real challenges for superintendents to attempt to maintain the quality of their programs with those teachers which remain. One respondent said: "You try to circumvent [the problem]. You try to look ahead too. Before that happens. You look for certain qualifications in teachers that you [do] hire. . . . [However] you do have to make some accommodations."

The changing nature of the curriculum has predicated a change in the nature of staff needed at board offices. One superintendent indicated his struggle with the problem:

> It's almost to the point we're going to have to contract people for a certain period of time to address the needs, as they come up, because society is changing, technology is changing, the dynamics are changing, where you can't have for example five co-ordinators in the district addressing all of your needs. You have to put one in for this year, and next year we'll emphasize something else, and then in two years' time probably go back to this because the demands are such.

Another reported that that was exactly what he was doing: "We take people either half time or full time from the school system for a year or two years to do a particular project . . . and then back to the classroom." He also reported:

> We've been taking advantage of people who are studying. Anybody in our district who is off doing a masters or something like that, we look at them and say how can we use them. . . . [For example, one] went off to study computers, and we said: "OK, so we're going to do a project in two years time . . ." So while he's studying, he's actually studying things that he can be useful doing for us.
>
> And we've got another guy who's doing a doctorate in teacher development, and we have him doing teacher development for us. So when he's

> actually doing his teacher development studies at OISE, he's doing work for us. . . . He's certainly got first class access to the "cutting edge" in terms of the country.

So, although there is generally less effort required to find teaching personnel to fill positions in schools, superintendents are having to exercise greater care in teacher selection because of changing demands within the curriculum. This difficulty is compounded by necessary staffing cut-backs, and by one additional factor, namely the reluctance of well-qualified people to assume certain positions or roles. Two superintendents, both of large urban boards referred to the complexities of these positions -- positions from which in the words of the one, "these guys are being blown out of the water" (see *Staffing at board office* earlier in this section), and roles which the other referred to as "pressure roles" in the following:

> I find that there are fewer people who are interested in being principals, because the pressure of being a principal of a school, an assistant superintendent, a program co-ordinator is much greater now than it has ever been. I don't see that there are that many people who are as interested in taking on these pressure roles as there were previously. And the reason they were prepared to go it before, I would speculate, is that the pressure didn't exist. So if you came into a principalship position before, there was very little if any pressure. Right now, at least in this city here to be principal of a large high school, or any large school . . . you are absolutely bombarded with pressure from your teachers, from your students, from your parents, and in all fairness, from your board office.

***Professional development.*** The comments in this sub-section comprise a logical extension of the ideas and problems discussed in the previous one. Surprisingly, only six superintendents made comments which were specifically categorized under "professional development." Of these, one Integrated and two Roman Catholic superintendents made extensive comments.

Professional development has changed over the quarter century. In the earlier part, professional development tended to be seen as upgrading of teacher qualifications, to bring them up to degree level. To-day with the majority of their teachers just past mid-career, with perhaps 10 years before retirement, and holding more than one university degree, the challenge verbalized by two superintendents is that of "keeping them on the cutting edge of their craft." A third put it in this way: "Teachers are very

slow to change. Very small "c" conservative. Extremely slow to change, and the challenge is how do you implement change? How do you get teachers to change their philosophies and their thoughts. It's not an easy task."

One of the major contributors in this sub-section described the change in the approach of the superintendent to professional development in this statement:

> The emphasis . . . is on professional growth and development of our individuals. Keeping them alive, and keeping them positive, and 25 years ago [if] you had a degree, you had a degree, great. Come on into one of our schools and teach, and we're happy with you, and no one's going to question you. To-day we want the degree for starters. We want your bachelor of education just for openers, and we want to make sure that you are attuned to educational developments. And not just attuned to what's happening in St. John's, we want you to have a Canadian view, we want you to be aware of what's happening in our country.
>
> Schools are different places than they were 25 years ago. We're looking at schools as organizations and organisms, and we're trying to move and develop them as individual entities, as places of learning. We're looking at your classroom as the theatre where you ply your professional craft, and we want you to be the best that you can possibly be, because children that parents are sending to you are very special people, and we want to do the best we can for them.

Three superintendents referred to teacher evaluation as a part of teacher professional development. According to one: "Prior to 1969, evaluation of teachers was strictly 'summative', done by supervisors with graduate degrees." It remains a prerogative of the superintendent, but "not very well exercised right now." He along with the other two indicated that the general emphasis at present was formative rather than summative, and that principals and in the case of non-tenured teachers assistant superintendents and occasionally superintendents were involved.

The "constant revision of courses, innovations," and the need to be "attuned to what's happening in Canada," were given as major reasons why professional development is needed. One-day workshops and additional formal university course work per se were viewed as less desirable vehicles for professional development. Said one:

> I think we've discovered over the years that these one-day short workshop kinds of things are not as effective as having a person who . . . is studying at some institution in a particular area to come and actually share his or her knowledge with the staff, and actually work with them in the class. And we feel it has to happen in the classroom now. Happening in

> a workshop setting like the board office or some hall, is not as effective as a consistent day to day or regular basis of somebody being available to a teacher to change methodology. . . .

Taking a negative view of the role of the university (Memorial University) in professional development, another stated: "I think the University has been given too large a role in teacher certification. I think teacher certification should belong to the profession." He also doubted that the proposed renewable teacher certification would effectively address the professional needs of teachers, suggesting another strategy -- structured opportunities for collaboration among professionals within the various disciplines -- as a better means to keep seasoned teachers on the "cutting edge of their craft."

Another negative comment was aimed at Memorial University. In the context of the challenges presented by the Royal Commission, according to this Roman Catholic superintendent, denominational school districts are asking themselves: "We are a Catholic school system, or whatever, and what are we supposed to be? what are we supposed to be doing as such? is there supposed to be a difference, if there is a difference what is it?" He spoke about the goals of education in Newfoundland as "very Christian" and "very democratic," but made this comment regarding the University's role in the preparation of teachers to fit into that context:

> The unfortunate thing about it is that our University has not prepared our teachers or our administrators to work in that kind of environment. I think in a way the University is trying to sterilize this. . . .
>
> And they may come along and criticize our system now. . . . Some of it is justified . . . because we've had a bunch of goals and aims and objectives which are very Christian and democratic, but we really haven't had the mechanisms to reach out for those goals in terms of preparation of teachers. We've said: 'Oh this is what you should know how to do in your classrooms, this is what you should try to do in the schools, but we as a university, we're non-theistic as such so we really can't prepare you for that. . . .'
>
> So, it's unfair to our teachers to ask them to go out and work in a denominational school we never prepared them for. . . . And our administrators as well. So, who does the preparation?

Over the years, the emphasis in teacher professional development has shifted from simple upgrading to obtain university degrees, to developing skills and competencies

needed by teachers to address certain identifiable needs in the programs of schools and of individual students. The role of the superintendent has changed from a somewhat clerical function of making teachers available for upgrading, or upgrading available for teachers, to a more professional role -- educational needs assessment, deployment of staff to meet these needs, and creation of opportunities for growth where the enhancement of the capabilities of individual teachers would be a benefit to students.

***Teacher welfare issues.*** In this sub-section are included comments related to the way teachers feel about their work and their working conditions. In all, the comments of five superintendents were included in this sub-section, and only one who had made extensive notes before coming to the interview made a major contribution in this area.

Three superintendents spoke about teacher morale. One superintendent placed the average age of his teachers at up to 47 years of age, indicating that fully one-third of his teachers would be eligible for retirement within five years. He claimed: "I know a number of [teachers] that are really stressed out -- whether or not the province is going to be able to afford to look after them when retirement comes." Another identified potential job loss as a result of declining enrolments as negatively impacting teacher morale. The third identified "uncertainty" as adding to the morale problem, but not as its total cause. He did not elaborate further.

According to the major contributor, student attitudes, and conditions prevalent within classrooms have added to stress and even "burn out" among teachers. And when teachers are just counting the years to retirement, it is hard to get them enthusiastic about any professional development. Another superintendent remarked that older teachers simply didn't have the energy to get up for early morning hockey games . . . that they were less able to do those extras which often build school spirit in general; and that at the same time they often had greater personal responsibilities within their own families. He mentioned that he tried to hire at least a few "young bucks" each year to keep a better mix in his teaching staff.

One additional change was noted -- the collective agreements. In a very matter-of-fact manner, the major contributor to this sub-section explained their impact upon the superintendent's role when he said:

> I was a teacher at that time, so I can remember when the first collective agreement came. Now there are three collective agreements. There's the NTA Collective Agreement, and there's the support workers' collective agreement with NAPE, and also the student assistants' collective agreement with NAPE. So there are three collective agreements that we've got to work with, and the articles are definite . . . and the typical language is different. . . . So you've got to be somewhat proficient in being able to administer the agreement and also being able to interpret some of the language and know what the implications are of your particular decision.

Teacher welfare concerns tended to centre around issues of morale resulting from uncertainties regarding conditions of employment. Changes in working conditions, new curricular demands, changing student populations, increasing average age of teachers, and the depressed economy have contributed to the uncertainty. These uncertainties, and the realities of new collective agreements have placed new demands upon the superintendent.

***Section summary.*** Responsibilities of superintendents as they pertain to obtaining and developing personnel have changed significantly during the past 25 years. During that time period provision has been made for a significant increase in board office staff with the addition of assistant superintendents, program co-ordinators, and certain other professionals such as psychologists. These changes have both added to superintendents' responsibilities and also greatly enhanced their capacity to discharge them. Superintendents now expend significant time and effort in making appointments to their own staff, and these staff greatly assist them in carrying out the broad mandate of the superintendency.

During the quarter century, the staffing of schools has consistently consumed much of the superintendent's time and effort. In the earlier portion, much effort was needed to simply fill teaching vacancies, and minimally qualified individuals were often the best that were available. A combination of declining enrolments, changing/-broadening curriculum, an increase in availability of better qualified teachers, have created a "buyer's market" in education; and the superintendency team now spends more person-hours on staffing, but with a focus on a defensible process for securing the best individual for the particular position.

A change in philosophy and practices relating to professional development of teachers has paralleled the change in quality and quantity of teachers available for employment. Early in the quarter century, professional development consisted generally of upgrading academic qualifications of teachers -- getting them up to at least a bachelor's degree level. Now that is considered a beginning point, a "given." Present emphasis is on the development of specific skills and abilities to meet identified needs of the curriculum or specific groups of students. The major share of professional development is presently orchestrated independently of universities and/or university credit.

In recent years, uncertainty regarding the future both by those needing to work and by those wishing to retire combined with difficulties such as changing curricular demands and disruptive students in the classroom have tended to increase stress in teachers' lives. Added to the reality of an aging work force, these factors have increased the superintendent's responsibility to try to build morale, to try to improve teachers' working conditions, to build professional self esteem among teachers, to make continued professional development attractive to aging teachers in particular, and to accomplish all this within an increasingly complex managerial framework proscribed by collective agreements and human rights concerns.

***Providing and Maintaining Funds and Facilities***

The area of providing and maintaining funds and facilities was found to be a major role component of superintendents. Although comments were not as extensive in this section as in a number of others, the emphasis within often rather concise comments, and the extensive agreement among the individual comments justify its description as a "major" role component. Comments in this section were grouped into four sub-sections as follows: (a) acquisition and/or building of facilities, (b) downsizing and school closures, (c) funding and discretionary income of boards, and (d) building maintenance issues.

***Acquisition and/or building of facilities.*** The comments of a total of eight superintendents were included in this sub-section. From the perspective of a centrally

located Roman Catholic school board, the following comment puts the quarter century into perspective, and provides a basis for regional contrasts:

> [providing and maintaining funds and facilities] has become more and more difficult. We are dependent on our government in the first instance [for funds], and on our Denomination Education Council in the second [for facilities]. . . .
>
> Facilities is still a big problem. I heard I believe it was the Minister say last spring when he cut the budget from 20 to 12 [million dollars]: "You know we spent 140 million over the past 5 years, and we've got so many bad schools in Newfoundland." The reason we've got so many bad schools is they weren't built properly in the first place. That is an ongoing struggle. It's as big a struggle now as it was in '69.
>
> [And] it's no easier to get money now than it was then. . . .
>
> But that's still a problem. I'd honestly say that providing and maintaining funds and facilities is just as difficult now as it was then. But there has been a fair improvement in the facilities.
>
> Yes. We do have better schools, there's no question about that. We do have better schools.

Three superintendents spoke of the well-constructed school buildings in mining communities such as in Labrador -- buildings resourced by the mining companies in the 1960s and 1970s, built to higher quality standards than was generally the practice elsewhere in the Province, and consequently much easier to maintain -- buildings which continue to give their districts good service. Under such desirable circumstances, the superintendents working in these favoured areas expended much less time and energy in maintaining schools, than did their counterparts in the remainder of the Province.

One superintendent commented specifically on the role of the superintendent in the planning and building process of a new facility:

> Contracts for building a new building . . . you're not expected to know every little detail, but you're responsible for getting the contract signed, [and] what's [put] into it. . . .
>
> We have consultants that do a lot of the work for us, but they are talking to us every day saying, "What do you need done here? Do you think we should do this?" And I have to say, "Is that within the building code?" and so on. They're able to advise us.

A second superintendent referenced what seems to be a new emphasis on facility functionality. He stated: "The change is in the nature of the facilities, and the nature

of the kinds of physical equipment that one needs to keep pace with technological innovations and their impact on education -- example, computer education, distance education." His colleague, whose superintendency spanned virtually the entire quarter century, contrasted building costs in 1970 with more recent costs. He attributed increases in building costs to stricter building codes, better building materials and techniques, and functionality of design, as well as to the inflation factor. His abbreviated comments follow:

> The codes have come in. There were no codes when we built that school [in 1970]. And I dare say now with the wiring it's OK, but there are a lot of codes that came into play that weren't there then. And in addition, of course, the structure, the brick siding, and the block, and the kind of foundations you had -- you know that school [recently built] . . . has gone down in the ground twelve feet on pillars -- it's lying on twelve feet of pillars!
>
> It's a combination of factors. And inflation of course and the dollar is a big thing as well, I guess.
>
> [We have a] better building . . . and that's the other part. We talked two things -- perhaps more importantly is the functional part of the building, the functional aspect, the educational functional part. Every school being built now, for instance, your resource centre is in the middle and all classrooms have equal access to it. It's not hidden away out in some corner, to give you one example. . . .
>
> And your science labs are adjacent to each other, and that sort of stuff. So it's built on a particular schematic -- the schematic is a functional schematic.

***Downsizing and school closures.*** Over the quarter century there have always existed individual schools or areas which were in a mode of declining enrolment. However, according to one superintendent, the population peaked in 1972, and it was another five to ten years after that date that the problems associated with downsizing became general. In all, seven superintendents made comments which were grouped in this sub-section. Three of these commented in a very matter of fact manner, of a population decline of nearly 40% from the peak year to 1993, of closing six or seven schools in his board within twelve years, and of consolidating fourteen or fifteen two-roomed schools early in the quarter century.

The push toward consolidation of smaller schools early in the quarter century was motivated by two factors, according to this last superintendent. As populations of the smaller two teacher schools continued to decline, there were the economic considerations of the inefficiencies associated with operating similar small programs in neighbouring communities; and secondly, although these small communities wanted to protect their schools, "there was no educational opportunity there." He organized major consolidations from an "equal opportunity" viewpoint.

The most articulate superintendent in this sub-section told of his experiences in coming to a Roman Catholic superintendency some time after the population peaked in 1972:

> So, in that particular context then, of declining enrolment, you always have to focus upon the future, and how to maintain therefore high educational opportunity, or increased educational opportunity while your human and financial resources are declining. . . . That's where I see my particular role to-day.
>
> Based upon what I saw in 1970, 71, 72, 73 in which superintendents and boards were concerned primarily with responding to increased enrolments . . . an overwhelming concern of the board and the administration was the housing of students -- building a classroom up here, putting up a wall here, remodelling, renovating, building. It was a frenzy.
>
> The boards at that time, the administration at that time were not saying: "What's going to be the situation in five years, and how do we plan so it doesn't take us by surprise when we get there?" Consequently they built the school, for example here in [this city], and promptly didn't need it. By the time it was finished, it wasn't needed!

When the consolidation of schools is necessary, superintendents must work with demographics such as where the population of the newly-created district will centre, and ages of students to be transported: and they must consider how to maximize existing facilities. When asked the question: "Are you able generally to close the school that is the poorest in quality, that has the highest heating bills and the highest maintenance: or are you not that fortunate?," a second Roman Catholic superintendent replied: "By a pure stroke of luck," and went on to provide the details. Presumably, other superintendents would not have been as fortunate, and would have found themselves using an inferior facility, or forced to make some other administrative compromise.

Presenting a view contrary to the popular conception that centralized and larger schools provide greater educational opportunity, a third Roman Catholic superintendent commented favorably regarding certain benefits for children in smaller schools with a creative teacher who is well-suited to that kind of situation. He said: "Just the independence that they [the students] have to acquire in terms of being responsible for their own learning and their own growth [constitutes an advantage]. And I see that the very small schools have a closeness, they're like little communities -- little families." He did not comment on the economic implications of generally adopting a smaller schools model for the Province, but simply rejected the phasing out of all small schools on the basis of the perceived educational advantages of the larger institutions.

***Funding and discretionary income of boards.*** Categorized in this sub-section are the comments of eleven superintendents. Resourcing school boards has become a major concern for superintendents, especially in recent years. Six of these superintendents spoke of the creation of School Tax Authorities in the early 1970s which provided boards with a means to generate locally certain revenues which they were able to use at their discretion. The subsequent abolition of the school tax in 1992, and its replacement with a revised provincially-managed funding formula was viewed as problematic by all who spoke on the issue -- problematic because while the new formula actually made greater revenues available to those boards in economically depressed areas, it reduced revenues for larger boards and those in more prosperous areas, and at the same time transferred much of the control of the budgets of all school boards to the Department Education. The superintendent of one of the largest boards in the Province itemized some of his difficulties:

> We don't have the money in [our district] right now that we had when we were getting school tax to do the types of things that we could have done. There's no question that if a major study were done now -- I say major because you'd have to delve into it in minute detail -- I don't think that we're delivering the programs now in the same fashion that we were four years ago, because we just don't have the money, we don't have access to it. I don't think our schools are as clean now as they were four years ago. I don't think we're maintaining our schools as well now as we were four years ago.

One interviewee who had served as superintendent since 1969, summed up his experience retrospectively: "So, I was preoccupied by funding more so than I wanted to be, and more so that I thought I would have been, and more so than some of the boards in this province -- boards who had adequate funding." In contrast, his colleague who represented a more favoured district noted a major change in his role in securing resources:

> Funding which was very straight forward before, now has become quite a challenge, and I would say now consumes ten times the amount of time it took before, despite the fact that we now have computers and all of the rest of it.
>
> I think now that the funding mechanisms are a lot more cumbersome than they were in the past. And I know in recent years, they certainly take a lot more study, that they take a lot more debate, correspondence, and meetings and whatever. . . . [for both] provincial funds, and for us funding from private sources like mining companies and so on.
>
> Now with the school tax [eliminated] . . . we have a lot more difficult time trying to fund things ourselves because we don't have discretionary dollars any more. . . . The dollars are not there any more for us. I know the reasons: (a) first of all because the school tax is gone, and (b) secondly because our mining company grants have been reduced, and (c) thirdly because government now is taking much more control of it. And so therefore it absorbs a lot more of our time than it did in the past in terms of trying to find the dollars to do the kinds of things we need to do.

Agreeing that there was a funding problem, and speaking from the perspective of a large eastern board, another superintendent saw the reason as a part of a broader issue:

> One of the things that bothers me to no end is that in Newfoundland we fund KG to grade 12 -- our 5-year-olds to our 18-year-olds -- at less than 50% of the national average, to go to school. But you take our 17- and 18+-year-olds at the post-secondary level, and we fund them at the national average. There's something incongruous about that. It doesn't fit. I know the basic answer is the federal dollar, but I think it's immoral for any government to sit and allow that type of disparity, in terms of how we treat our children. I think our society is paying a tremendous price for it.

From a somewhat smaller eastern board, another superintendent took a "swing" at the provincial government as well:

> The types of underfunding that occurred in 1969 and now are different, but it is still underfunding in terms of the delivery system. The difficulty is that school boards in Newfoundland are highly dependent, more now

> than they were two or three years ago when they had tax authority revenues, and they could access through the tax authority system increased revenues for educational expenditures. . . .
>
> In terms of not having determined (a) what are acceptable facilities, (b) what are acceptable supports, (c) what are basic programs in schools, (d) what are the kinds of basic professional development activities that boards can engage in -- in terms of these issues not having been addressed by the provincial government, and funding formulas put in place to allow the realization of even a provincially determined stable support system, to my way of thinking is the more pressing economic kind of difficulty. . . .
>
> The difficultly that it causes superintendents is that there's more political pressures out there to be effective, to be responsive, to be doing things; yet at the same time the organization is not schematized, and there are no funding formulas that articulately get to an understanding of what school boards are basically doing in terms of strategic planning.

Recognizing the social pressures to achieve greater results from the system, that the more traditional means of financing are dwindling or no longer available, and that money is available for specific parts of the educational enterprise from the federal government and other sources, another eastern superintendent made the statement which follows. He spoke in the context of the frustrations involved in upgrading aging facilities -- such as improving electrical wiring to accommodate computer laboratories -- while needing to get "funds through whatever means he or she can." He explained:

> If I were given the opportunity to set up a board office next year . . . do you know who I'd hire before I hired anyone? I'd hire someone who would do absolutely nothing only access federal funds for me. . . . And I think that person would pay for themselves within six months.
>
> If I had somebody here at this office who knew all the funds that could be made available to schools through the federal government grant process -- CEIC and others. If I could hire someone to do nothing for me saying: "Get money for this school board to do things in their schools." I think that person would pay for himself within six months.
>
> And that's something that we're really lacking in education. We don't take the time to hire these types of people. Businesses do it. Community Colleges do it. Universities do it. They hire people and say; "Look, your job is to get money for us. Organize a charitable foundation for us. Go out to the businesses. Do nothing, only sell our school board for us. Do a public relations job. But access these funds. Fill out the forms for us. Learn how to do it. Become familiar with it. Become a *lobbyist*."

> That's what I would hire first. And that seems really odd, in relationship to the fact that I am an educator, and I probably should be thinking about curriculum. But I need that money to get my curriculum delivered. . . .

There was general agreement among all interviewees that the pressures involved in resourcing school districts constituted a major change, and were a major force distracting the superintendent from his ideal role as an educational leader.

***Building maintenance issues.*** The issue of building maintenance was a logical sequel to issue of resourcing discussed in the previous sub-section. Only six interviewees addressed it specifically. Three felt privileged to work in areas where buildings were well built, and well maintained. In the following quotation one pointed out that it is often after a building is built, that the real difficulties begin:

> After you get the stuff in, is it working properly?
>
> If there's a door that falls off and you want to put the hinges on so that the door swings a different way then that's going to be a problem. You know that some fire commissioner's going to walk in and turn it down.
>
> If the elevator's not coming up to the proper level, where somebody knows the difference, even though the students can go and come on the elevator, but somebody can walk in and say, "That's wrong".
>
> If there's an exit light out, then there's somebody's going to be on your back pretty soon, even though you know you don't need exit lights in the middle part of the day.

But the most common difficulties associated with building maintenance are the issues of finding resources to do the necessary. One pointed out that a changed curriculum required a changed facility:

> The whole change in the curriculum of theatre arts . . . the whole concept of industrial arts/industrial education/computer studies has put tremendous pressure on school boards from the point of view of finances, and from the point of view of facilities. The facilities themselves have to be changed to accommodate it. And that's really really difficult in a board like we've got here where about half of our schools are schools that were built back in the late '40s and early '50s.

A Roman Catholic superintendent summarized the frustrations faced by superintendents as they relate to resourcing the maintenance of facilities to meet building and safety codes, to meet new curricular demands, and to meet the expectations of community users:

> In terms of superintendents in our province in general, I'm sure they have had their share of aggravation. I know because I'm on the Catholic Education Council Finance Committee and I know that the dollars that are requested for facilities and the amount that are there are no way at all near each other. . . .
>
> I think what you have seen is facilities aged quite a bit, and not even meeting modern safety standards in some cases -- health or fire safety standards; and so you're in a dilemma as a superintendent, whether you have the resources to even meet the regulations in terms of safety, certainly not to meet what parents would expect in terms of clean, modern facilities for their kids to go to school in. . . .

***Section summary.*** There was strong consensus among those interviewed that issues related to housing and resourcing education constituted a major part of the current role of the superintendent of education. Because the first portion of the study period was a time of increasing enrolments and growth, the building of facilities was perhaps a greater concern then than it was later. A few favoured regions were assisted by mining companies, and were able to build extremely well-designed, well-constructed schools; a situation which has facilitated programming and resulted in reduced maintenance costs, right up to the present.

Changing programming requirements, aging buildings, multiplying governmental regulations at all levels, declining student enrolments, escalating demands upon and expectations for the system, and dwindling resources all combine to complicate the superintendent's role. For ten or fifteen years, the operation of school tax authorities provided some discretionary income to boards, but by the end of the quarter century superintendents were looking increasingly to federal funding programs to maintain solvency and to sustain even a reduced level of service. There was a general consensus that although government had definitely committed more resources to education, the increase was not in proportion to the additional demands being placed on the delivery system. In order to "stretch" scarce dollars, superintendents were forced to be creative -- securing alternative funding, cutting programs, consolidating schools, or whatever.

Resourcing for growth and expansion characterized education 25 years ago, whereas the opposite is now the case. With the exception of a few boards in growth areas, resourcing for maintenance and orderly down-sizing is the present reality. And in all areas, there is pressure upon the superintendent to maintain educational quality in

spite of dwindling resources, and in spite of greater governmental control of those resources that are available.

### *Maintaining Effective Community Relations*

The area of maintaining effective community relations is the final area considered under the conceptual framework of the study. In all eleven superintendents made comments which were categorized or sub-categorized within this section. Communication was seen as the key to community relations -- communication both within and without the jurisdiction of the board. Commenting on the larger school boards gradually being created by consolidation, and looking forward to the possibility of even larger boards in future, one superintendent noted that diverse population and vast geography were factors necessitating effective communication. The superintendent of a large eastern board articulated his philosophical rationale as a justification for the emphasis which he placed on communications. He commented on both the need for and the nature of communication:

> If you have a more articulate, more demanding sets of stake holders who are pointedly putting pressures within the system, there is a greater need for first of all the stake holders to understand what are the kinds of legal philosophical parameters, goals, objectives, and missions of the organization. That alone dictates communication awareness programs, education programs. I don't mean education programs in telling them what we are doing, but in exploring with them and leading them to an internalization of what we are doing.
>
> Additionally you have to have a better communication system such that these people can understand there are mechanisms in place whereby they can input, they can impact, and where feedback cycles and systems are working in terms of the organization sending the messages back to them or carrying the messages back to them personally.

Comments in this section are grouped under three sub-topics: (a) relationship with the media, (b) board-school/community relations, and (c) school-community relations.

***Relationship with media.*** Although comments of six superintendents were sub-categorized in this section, the three major contributors were superintendents of large school boards. This suggests that the issues of communication may be of greater importance in larger districts, and nothing in the study was found to counter this idea.

Three superintendents commented that communications had changed drastically over the quarter century. One said: "From 1969 up to about 1980, you very seldom if ever would hear a superintendent on the radio or on TV, from 1969 - 1980. I don't know why that happened, [they] just didn't." Another added: "I'll bet that if you look in the paper and go back over the past eight months, ten months, year . . . you won't find very many editions of the *Evening Telegram* that there will not be in some way shape or form an education story." A third indicated that communications are an area that has changed in the work of the superintendent over the quarter century: "Changed very much. . . . The superintendent in this day and age is under the gun all the time with the media."

From the perspective of a large board, came the following comment:

> You have to be on the alert all the time. You have to be very careful what you say. It is very easy to put your foot in your mouth. . . . You have to develop a good rapport with the media. You can't ignore them. If they call, you have to get back to them, because if you don't get back to them, they will perceive that there is a reason for your not getting back to them, and their perception is not always that it is a good reason why you can't get back to them.

From another large board on the opposite side of the Island, another superintendent agreed, indicating: "If the media wish an interview, then I make it a live interview if I can at all." Regarding public relations, he stated that in his opinion:

> Public relations . . . is one of the areas of weakness in the training which many of us have received, in that we're not really trained to take advantage of the opportunities that the media give us to relate to our people.

The superintendents of two smaller boards also spoke of using the media. The first said: "We've used the local newspaper, and to some degree TV, but not nearly as much as perhaps we could have." And the words of the second carried political overtones. "You've got to be an expert in how to handle the media, and sometimes be able to use the media to your own advantage."

The superintendent who mentioned a "weakness in the training" added the further explanation:

> But I believe that we might more effectively use the media, and, given the increasingly high profile now, and I think that the demand for total-quality

> service by our clients -- it's becoming an imperative that those of us in this position really have to know the best means of getting our message out.
>
> If you look at some of the ads on T.V. -- "I like the Remington shaver so much that I actually bought the company," or Lee Iacocca actually getting on doing the ads for Chrysler, or Tony Baldwin flying the carpets from Castle Carpets. . . . I feel that if we're going to flag education, then it's going to fall to us, as CEOs of schools boards do that.

In the opinion of the superintendent of one of the largest boards in the province, "the biggest change that I have seen in the superintendency, in *my* perception of it, is one of public relations." He went on to give reasons for the change similar to those of interviewee previously quoted, and to give the implications of these changes as they impact the role of the superintendent:

> The public are more demanding now than they were in 1969, and in 1975, and in 1980, and in 1985, and in 1990 -- much more demanding. They're making you more accountable, and so they should be. I have no problem with that.
>
> But you have to realize that therefore you must have your finger on every single pulse in the district, because if you don't they'll perceive it, and they'll know. And when you have a system [the size of ours]; to keep up with all of that, you have to attend a lot of meetings, because all my assistant superintendents are responsible for particular areas and they're responsible for being the advisor to certain board committees, and I have to try to get to every single board committee, because I can't expect them to take their time and brief me on everything.

***Board-school/community relations.*** There was strong agreement among all superintendents that public relations with the schools in their boards and with the communities served presently constitutes a major role component. Comments of ten superintendents were included in this sub-section. The time and emphasis given to this area of responsibility varied from board to board, and opinions regarding variations over time were somewhat divided. For example, the superintendent quoted last in the previous sub-section was not certain that there had been a significant change in the issues which parents were bringing to superintendents, nor in the frequency rate with which they were bringing them. He had moved from the superintendency of a mid-sized board to a very large board in the latter portion of the 1980s, and attributed the increases which he observed as much to the increase in board size as to a more demanding public. And

a superintendent who had directed the consolidation of many smaller schools within his board early in the quarter century indicated that: "In one sense we're probably communicating less than before." He explained:

> For example when I was involved in consolidating schools back in '69, '70, '71, '72, even up to '75, I made sure that I visited every community, and had a public meeting. We must have 40 communities in this district. We had a public meeting in every community before we closed a school. If we had ten communities involved in one school, I had ten meetings, and I'd call a meeting in the old school house in that community and say, "Look, this is what we'd like to do."
>
> I found that kind of communication very effective, because there's a face on things right away, and people can see if you're sincere, up front, or whatever. And I thought that was a tremendous communications technique.
>
> In recent years, we haven't had occasion to do that, but when the need arose, it's been no problem to get people together to talk about issues -- financing, for example.

Five superintendents, however, did agree that they were experiencing pressures from a more articulate, a more demanding public (including parents). Their response was in their varied public relations mechanisms. They were pressured (a) to provide new or upgraded facilities such as gymnasiums, cafeterias, and laboratories, (b) to provide special services for handicapped and special needs students as special groups with "access rights" to education, (c) to deal with individual concerns about what's going on in a particular class or classroom, or where a particular child is going to attend school, (d) to provide information regarding educational issues such as mainstreaming, disruptive students, and even the use of taxpayers' dollars, and (e) to provide information regarding the management plans of the board such as proposed school consolidations and closings. Reacting to the magnitude of the responsibility upon the superintendent, an interviewee with a relatively short tenure said:

> I find it almost impossible -- but yet we must forever strive -- to keep people informed and abreast with what's going on. The first thing I have to do is, of course make sure that my board is informed. I have to make sure that central office staff and co-ordinators are kept informed. I have to make sure that principals are kept informed and for the most part through them teachers are kept informed. I have to make sure that the business part of the operation is kept informed and through them all of our

> support staff out in schools. Just to keep all of the various stakeholders and publics informed is to me becoming a massive job.

But like the superintendent quoted first in the introduction to this section, he saw communication -- public relations -- as more than merely providing information. He continued:

> Whereas one time it might have been OK to write a memo . . . people now don't always want one-way flow of communication. They question every authority that's there, and the best way to get out and deal with these problems is to talk to people face to face, be it in large groups like PTA meetings, or to meet with PTA [executives] for example, or to meet with individual parents or teachers, or what have you.
>
> I'm finding that even over the last four years right now, I'd say that my job as a communicator through the various networks that I have at my disposal, is taking more and more of my time. And I'm not complaining about that, because I think that it's imperative to make sure that people are informed so that they will have not only a greater knowledge of what we are doing, but they'll be more sensitive to the issues that we have to deal with.

Speaking of a more demanding public, another superintendent said:

> I think that the paradigm has changed a little bit, and the citizens are becoming much more aggressive in their demands, and in their requests, and in their desires about us. And whether it's the fact that someone is a neighbour, or whether it's the fact that you want to use our facilities. It may not be that you want to use them because you are a parent, it may be that you want to use them because you are a taxpayer, and you want to come and use our gymnasia on the weekend, because you want to organize softball for the kids in the neighbourhood or for your own personal recreation, and you're turning around and saying . . . hey, you receive taxpayers' dollars, and you have to serve the whole community. You don't operate just to serve little children and give them a curriculum from 9:00 to 3:00. You've got a much broader role here in the community. I think that's a change.

Another superintendent said it this way: "I think parents are more and more vocal, and they feel they have a right to come and ask questions, to get answers." He later added:

> That's not necessarily a bad thing . . . but what I'm saying is that you've got to be a little more skilful in dealing with people that are coming to your premises; whereas before the public was out there, now the public is right on your doorstep all the time.

Collectively, the superintendents gave a list of mechanisms used in carrying out their role in public relations. The list included "face to face meetings" at all levels,

written communications, fax communications, periodic board newsletters, administration via a wide range of committees, use of the media, interaction with students during personal visits to schools, and in the words of one: "I'd make it a basic policy to return all phone calls, to respond to all letters, and to go to all PTA meetings."

Again from a large board, the superintendent stated that even though public relations was taking a greater amount of time than it would have years ago, that that role was difficult to delegate to any assistant superintendent. From a somewhat smaller board, his Roman Catholic colleague indicated that virtually all of his routine communication to schools and teachers was effected via his assistant superintendents. But he reserved what he called inspirational communication for himself as superintendent. He said:

> I find myself communicating more now on an inspirational level -- as opposed to an informational level. . . . I let my assistant superintendents communicate managerial things, and operational things. And all I ever communicate now in terms of memo or speech -- you know, standing in front of them, this kind of thing -- are more inspirational in terms of new directions.
>
> [For example] at the opening of school . . . I spoke to them about change, and being change agents, and what the basic lessons of change would be and so on, and what we would face in the future and this kind of thing. And this is what I do say [for] Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, whatever occasions throughout the year. It's more a time that I inspire them to be professional, as opposed to saying "I have this information for you."

He went on to explain his vision of education as a "mission" and of schools as "caring institutions," of his deeply-felt responsibility to inspire his teachers with the same vision, and of his burden to show teachers that the unique contribution of each to the organization is appreciated. He continued:

> I don't believe that there's any such thing as burn out because of work for teachers. I think burn out is a function of growth. When people have stopped growing, then they fall into a negative growth. . . .
>
> So that's why I feel that we have to make a major effort to have teachers see more to their job than it just being . . . mathematics or English or whatever.

***School-community relations.*** Three superintendents made comments which related to the role of the superintendent as a leader in school-community relations. From

a medium-sized mostly-rural board came this comment: "We've encouraged our principals to have adequate, more-than-adequate communications with our people -- not just through report cards, but through newsletters and PTA meetings and that type of thing." And in a large mostly-urban board, the superintendent directed his principals to refer all requests for information and/or interviews to the board itself, because "there should be one spokesman to the public on all issues regardless of where it is." He went on to explain that he would refer local issues back to the school but justified this practice of his board, saying, "If you let all the principals access the media, and talk to the media whenever the media (wishes) . . . you could end up with one bad situation."

The third superintendent in this sub-section spoke of the role of the superintendent and his board in establishing policies and procedures regulating the way schools relate to their publics. One of results of the integration of the schools of several religious denominations was reflected in a policy which he described, and which since no other superintendent referenced having a similar policy, may be unique to his board:

> We have a policy here as an integrated board. We will not allow to be done in any of our schools, in any schools which were previously operated by let's say, a denomination, anything which would be offensive to that particular denomination.

For example, on this basis, his board does not permit the use of school facilities for any activity which would involve consumption of alcoholic beverages, except in a case where the only public facility in an isolated community is the school gym, even though they might stand to gain a good rental income by relaxing this policy. He also mentioned that because of the health principles espoused by some of his constituent churches, the board would not condone the selling of sweet chocolates -- a favorite fund raiser among other schools in the province. He gave more examples, and illustrated the frustrations of the policy:

> So such things as fund-raising, through means of bingo, ticket sales, or doing things which would put people at risk or, which are contrary to the principles of our denominations which are involved, no, we don't do that.
>
> And, it can get frustrating when the school really wants to have a field trip, for which they have to raise $500, and they can't do it that way, but yet the neighbouring school can do it. . . . Kind of based on the protestant ethic, we say, "You can raise money by giving service (like, for example, if you want to get out with your graduating class and wash

> cars, you can charge for that), but you can't go out and sell $100 worth of tickets on a $10 prize."

This policy has certainly impacted the role of the superintendent. It is an example of the limitations resulting from integration of schools of the different religious denominations which hold constitutional rights in education. But as far as the way in which schools relate to their communities in the rural part of the province, this superintendent made this comment:

> Even today there isn't a big difference between the way the school relates [to the community] in rural Newfoundland to the way it related in Labrador 20 years ago. And that is to say that people were not in easy communication with the teaching staff.
>
> However, the role of the school as a community institution is still fairly well recognized, and I believe that in the years ahead, especially in the rural communities it would probably revert to where it was almost as a community centre, and I'm thinking particularly of the recreation facilities which are provided in the schools, and in some instances of the library facilities.
>
> We have a number of instances in our district now where there is a co-operative relationship between the public libraries board and the school board. That may develop further as well in some of our smaller communities.

***Section summary.*** Communication was seen as the key to effective community relations. The superintendents typically characterized communication as more than passing out information. It involves gaining an understanding, internalizing, and providing feed-back. Changes in community relations over the quarter century involved changes in relations with the media, with the public, with parents and students, and within the board organization itself.

Over the quarter century, media interest in education has changed from being nearly non-existent to being constant, particularly in the larger boards. Public scrutiny of the education system is continual. Superintendents indicated that they must develop a positive rapport with the media, provide them what they ask, while being careful not to "put your foot in your mouth." Rightly employed, they find that the media can be an effective means of promoting their organizations.

Superintendents stressed the importance of communicating their plans to parents and stake-holders. Face to face and public meetings were deemed to be more effective

than memos and newsletters. In addition, working through committees and interaction with students promoted positive public relations, and were important means of maintaining effective community relations.

### *Chapter Summary*

This chapter has presented the study findings regarding the nature of changes in the role of the Superintendent of Education in the province of Newfoundland (including Labrador) over the quarter century between the post-Warren Royal Commission restructuring of 1969 and the post-Williams Royal Commission period up to 1994. Comparative data were drawn from a contrast of the Schools Act (1969) with the Schools Act (consolidated 1990); and a comparison of survey responses to the King Questionnaire, first administered in 1972, and again in 1993. The major portion of the chapter comprised a summary presentation of perceptions of a stratified sample of superintendents incumbent near the close of the study period. These were reported in six major sections -- (a) the setting, and the five areas of responsibility given in the Specific Conceptual Framework: (b) superintendent - school board relations, (c) improving educational opportunity, (d) obtaining and developing personnel, (f) providing and maintaining funds and facilities, and (g) maintaining effective community relations.

***The Schools Acts***. At the beginning of the quarter century, considerable ambiguity existed regarding the relationships among business managers, superintendents, and school boards. The most significant change noted in the consolidated Schools Act (1990) clarified in legislation what had become a general practice by that time -- that business managers were not parallel but subordinate in position to superintendents.

***Questionnaire results***. Comparative questionnaire results also indicated that, since 1972, superintendents have assumed greater responsibility in the business and financial areas of running their schools. Superintendents see their present role as more all-encompassing; they are now more involved in delegation of responsibility, and they have greater autonomy within board policies than earlier in the study period. In spite of any legal mandate to do so, present superintendents more strongly believe that they should retain the right to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations.

Superintendents now assume less responsibility for approving orders for supplies and equipment; they are now more unlikely to be members of the teachers' professional organization; less likely to be involved in school level public relations activities; and less likely to be involved in professional negotiations involving the teachers' "union".

***Role setting***. Interviews indicated that the year 1969 was the focal point of a period of change more than a precise point of change. There were new boards, new Denominational Education Councils, and before too long a Collective Agreement with teachers. Between the school level and the Department level, the re-structuring in effect created a new administrative level in which superintendents began to develop or define by practice, a new role. Tensions and often distrust existed between the various "players" as old lines of authority and former responsibilities were replaced by new ones.

***Superintendent - school board relations***. Over the quarter century, partially as a result of experience, partially as a result of societal trends in general, and partially as a result of the encouragement of superintendents and the success of the educational enterprise as a whole, board members gradually became more sophisticated, became more involved in the administration process, and assumed greater responsibility for the actions of the board. The process of making decisions changed, from an "advise and consent" ritual to a more consultative approach. By 1994, in order for superintendents to continue to lead, they must exercise care that they are leading in a manner or direction which their boards will follow.

***Improving educational opportunity***. In relation to programming, present superintendents must deal with pressures which were significantly less or non-existent a quarter century ago. The growth in demand for special education services to widely varied groups of students has outstripped any increase in resources to meet these demands. The number of board based personnel has increased significantly, requiring new inter-personal skills on the part of superintendents, as they co-ordinate the new larger "organisms" into which their board offices have grown.

***Obtaining and developing personnel***. The personnel function of the superintendency has changed. Superintendents spend considerable time and effort in making appointments to their own office staff, and this staff assists in discharging the varied responsibilities of the superintendent. The emphasis in staffing schools has

changed from simply filling teaching positions, to securing the best qualified individual based on a careful needs assessment. The emphasis in professional development has changed from encouraging and assisting teachers in obtaining their first degree, to the developing and refining of specific skills required to meet specific program and/or student needs. And in keeping with the new emphases, superintendents themselves require a greater understanding of the skills needed by teachers.

***Providing and maintaining funds and facilities***. There was strong consensus among those interviewed that the housing and resourcing of education in Newfoundland has changed over the quarter century. The initial portion of the study period was a time of growth, characterized by almost frenzied activity in construction in some areas of the Province. In some instances, non-government resources were available for building. The latter portion of the study period was a time of declining enrolments and dwindling resources -- requiring different management skills on the part of superintendents. In particular, the discretionary income of boards has been reduced, forcing superintendents to be very creative in order to respond to even a portion of the escalating demands for programming and services which continue to be placed on their schools.

***Maintaining effective community relations***. In the area of maintaining effective community relations, there was strong consensus among superintendents that communication is the key. Over the quarter century, dealing with the media has increased from unimportant to extremely important, especially in larger boards. Usually, superintendents reserve to themselves the role of media spokesperson. Also, they indicated that it was important to be able to use the media "to get their message out".

In reference to all areas of the conceptual framework, the sources used in this study indicated that the role of the superintendent has changed over time, from its initial definition post-1969 right up to the present. The causes of these changes is the subject of Chapter Six.

## Chapter Six

# The Causes of Role Changes

Presented in this chapter are the study findings regarding the causes of changes in the role of the superintendent of education in Newfoundland over the quarter century following 1969. Some comments regarding causes of role changes are to be found in Chapter Five, because in that chapter it was found impossible to discuss the present role of the superintendent without referencing role changes over time. As a result the current chapter is somewhat shorter than was the previous one.

Data for this chapter were obtained from the semi-structured interviews among a stratified interview sample of superintendents as indicated in the "Design of the Study" section of Chapter Three. The data are presented in five sections following the Williams' model included in the specific conceptual framework of the study. The five sections are: (a) demand for higher standards, (b) changing economic conditions, (c) changing social conditions, (d) changing population dynamics, and (e) changing technology. Judging from the number and length of comments, and the intensity with which superintendents made them, "changing social conditions" and "changing economic conditions" (in that order) were the forces having impacted their role to the greatest extent. In the perception of some, changing technology had contributed to certain social changes, and to some the demand for higher standards was in part a consequence of certain social changes.

### *Demand for Higher Standards*

Superintendents are subjected to immense pressures from a number of sectors of society -- from business, from parents and community, and from within the educational system itself. Each of these different stakeholder groups has its unique expectations for schools, and therefore for superintendents. One superintendent had this to say:

> The demand for higher standards -- that's a worldwide phenomenon. We're living in a global village, and our graduates have to compete with graduates from Germany and the United States, and everywhere around the world. That demand for higher standards, in my view, has impacted

the role of the superintendent, in that the superintendent has to ensure that there is a vision of excellence created in the school system.

***Expectations of the business community***. The comments of three superintendents focused in particular upon the expectations held by the business community for the K - 12 education system. Two agreed that, to some degree, business misunderstands the mandate of the educational system, at least from the point of view of educators. After nearly a quarter century as superintendent, one of them said: "I think their higher standards are different from our higher standards." He spoke of "the Harold Lundrigans and the Economic Recovery Commission," and his colleague spoke of a businessman such as a garage owner; all complaining that "youngsters are coming out [of high school], and they can't spell, they can't compute, [they can't do percentages], they can't do this and can't do that." He then added, "That's always there when you talk to the business people." He went on to explain the difference between the expectations of businessmen and educators as in these words:

> The one thing (this is a kind of a contradiction in terms, but it's important) they don't understand out there is what the education process is about. The education process is about helping students to think and to rationalize for themselves. They may not necessarily know how to do mathematics properly, but they have to think through mathematics, they have to rationalize through mathematics. Down the road, . . . they're going to get into different situations, they have to rationalize themselves out of that. Now a lot of people don't understand that concept of education. The only concept they understand is: "Give them good education. Make sure they can add and subtract and multiply and compute properly when they go to the bank. Make sure they can write a business letter properly. . . ."
>
> Higher standards to an educator is to teach youngsters how to think and how to rationalize, and how to command themselves properly in public; and a lot of these other things will come incidentally. But the Chamber of Commerce, and the bank manager out there, want somebody who can do the things, and compute right away. Now I contend that these things will come, and I think youngsters are getting these things. But there is a difference between the two [philosophies].

Noting the tension created between the mandate of schools generally espoused by educators, and the specific agenda for schools held by the business community, the third superintendent articulated a more all-encompassing philosophy -- a broadened mandate for schools:

> There seems to be a greater realization sweeping across society generally that education or the school system has a contributory role to our wealth and our comfort as a nation, and people are no longer looking at schools in a nostalgic way. I think they're looking at schools now as a means to develop citizenry for tomorrow, and to develop national leadership and to achieve national excellence, and improve the quality of our social fabric as Canadians. And that demand is having a tremendous positive impact . . . on education. It's hurting at the moment.

***Parents' and community expectations***. The significance attached to this area of the study is indicated by the fact that all of the superintendents interviewed made comments which were included either in this sub-section, or in the one immediately following.

Taking a view somewhat different from the others, a superintendent whose tenure spanned the entire study period stated simply:

> I haven't sensed that people are expecting higher standards. I've always sensed that they've always expected high standards. We're probably hearing more about it. . . .
>
> I know that there is a need for greater emphasis on math and science if we're going to compete in the economic world, that kind of thing. I think people are looking at that, and saying schools are failing on that one. But you asked me a specific question, if I sensed a greater demand. No, I haven't sensed a greater demand.

Representative of the perceptions of the majority in this sub-section is the following comment from the superintendent of one of the largest urban boards in the Province:

> People are looking at the schools for more than teaching the "three R's" -- much more. I think people are assuming that you're going to teach kids to be literate and numerative, to communicate and so on; but they want more. They want kids to have proper values. They want children to be able to resolve conflict. They want youngsters to be able to relate well with their peers, to survive in the adult world, and they want people who are going to be involved in society. They are not looking at us any more and saying: "Teach them the multiplication tables, teach kids how to divide, or tell them about the history of England or something or other." They want much more.

Collectively, the interviewees mentioned a wide range of specific expectations on the part of community, students, and parents. These expectation placed demands upon the school system (and the superintendency) in the areas of (a) variety and levels of course

offerings; (b) learning resources -- computers, computer software, media resources, video tapes, and video machines; (c) teaching methodologies; (d) education and administrative policies on health issues such as AIDS; (e) education and administrative policies on what some viewed as moral issues such as homosexuality and abortion; (f) justice issues with students "sentenced to school;" (g) facilities such as libraries, laboratories, gymnasia, and cafeterias; and (h) student retention and discipline; in addition to (i) academic achievement and student pass rates.

Speaking of the pressure of community expectations upon his small mostly-rural district, the superintendent of an Integrated board stated:

> There's a big change in expectations of leadership in education. . . . There's a lot of expectations from the community on the school system. When there's vandalism and so on in the community, they turn to the schools: "If they'd tighten up discipline in the schools this wouldn't be happening." I think they probably to some extent feel that the parents have given up, therefore the responsibility has got to be the school['s]."

From a somewhat larger district, his Roman Catholic colleague also connected non-academic community expectations and the leadership of the superintendent:

> I think that [changing social conditions have affected the work of the superintendent, and] that's been a major change in recent years in terms of expectations for the superintendent -- our leadership. Because . . . the school has been looked upon as the place where all of these things can be dealt with, and whatever happens in society, now it seems that the school is the place to answer -- which I have some problems with. . . .
>
> I think that society is really leaving a lot to the school, and it's making it difficult to do the job that we were originally about.

He went on to explain how these non-academic expectations added to the traditional academic emphasis of schools have presented challenges to the superintendent:

> I see that for the superintendent first of all as being a major challenge in the sense of being able to be well informed in all of these areas, and secondly trying to find a way that the system can handle them and handle its regular responsibility in terms of academics as well.
>
> So, that's a struggle. Because all these things are important to society -- they're not only important to the individual child and family. . . . And it's important that you have a position on a lot of these. Some of them are actually moral issues for our board in terms of the abortion issue and all of those, but they're struggles for kids in their own heads, and [for] teachers. . . .

> So all of that is there. . . . There is a host of social, justice, and health issues that are all part of the school, and at the same time, we have to try to keep up with the Japanese.

As well, six other superintendents mentioned the pressures they felt in regard to expectations for academic excellence. Although both their school systems and their own leadership tend to be evaluated by indicators of academic achievement, in actual practice superintendents have very little opportunity to exercise academic leadership. Several voiced frustration at what they perceived as unfair comparisons of their systems with others such as the Japanese. A Roman Catholic superintendent offered the following defense of his district's lower achievement levels, when comparing his inclusive system to a more elitist one:

> People say we want our students to achieve at the same level as . . . Japanese students, but they are not willing to accept the culture that created the high academic standard -- 220 day school year, the schools are run like military colleges, discipline is the highest, everything is focused: uniforms, group cohesion, a singularity of culture. I mean there is only one culture in Japan -- a homogeneous population. . . . And as well of course, the Japanese track like crazy, in the sense that there is a filtering out of students. There are exams at various levels. In the academic stream . . . if you don't achieve a certain level at say the end of grade six, you don't go on. . . .
>
> Our [system] is inclusive, and theirs is exclusive. Theirs is elitist -- very much so. If we want the product we're going to have to accept the process that produced the product.

Also in the defensive mode, a senior superintendent of an Integrated board spoke with emotion in a similar vein, fingering in particular the inclusion of handicapped students into regular classrooms:

> OK, you'd like to have higher standards, I mean this is what you get [Education Minister] Decker and others coming through with. I think we've done very well. I mean we are keeping way more children in school. We're providing far more services for these kids. . . .
>
> If you want higher standards, give me the power to take a number of kids out of the classroom, and I can give you a higher standard from a classroom. . . . But the pressures are there on me to basically keep those children in the class and still do the total job with whatever that teacher can put out there. I think things have become way more difficult for teachers. . . .

> I have a lot of sympathy for teachers who have 25 kids in their class, and a fair range, and were doing a good job; who now have a multiple handicapped child in that class and are expected to do the same job -- and you can't do it. . . .
>
> Your standard hasn't gone up one bit. Your standard goes down, when you do that. And if you're going to be everything to everybody, your standard is going to drop. But I know we want the higher standards. Lovely. If we want better standards, we're going to have to do a whole lot of things differently.

Superintendents have been subjected to increasing pressures from the public -- pressures from stake holders and special interest groups. These pressures often put conflicting demands upon both the school system and the superintendency. In the words of one superintendent, years ago: "The pressure wasn't there. Basically, back in 1969 and for some time after that, as long as you had a nice clean school with some books in the library, and this kind of thing, you had a good school."

***Organizational accountability***. Certain pressures or demands originate within the educational system. Two superintendents' comments looked inward. One superintendent remarked introspectively:

> Maybe we haven't been doing as well as we should have been. Maybe we haven't been investing as much in education as we should have been. Maybe we're not looking at the quality of what we've been putting in. We're putting lots of money into education -- 25% of our economy goes into education in Newfoundland, but "Are we spending it wisely?" is the question I'd have to ask.

Commenting about the superintendent's role in accountability, the second stated: "The superintendent is accountable to the school board, but he also has to set in place a mechanism to keep everybody in the system accountable."

The third superintendent commenting in this sub-section pointed out "that there is a need for an organization to understand the need to more responsibly demonstrate that it is being effective, it is being efficient, it is being purposeful, it is reaching the objectives . . . that society holds for it." He further commented that on the organizational level:

> The demand for higher standards means that school boards have to be more aware of the kinds of performance indicators like CTBS [Canadian Test of Basic Skills] and the kinds of demonstrations that the public expects in those standards as to how organizations are being effective.

> For example: the standards of the parents for boards to be effective, to be reaching their goal, to clearly have the students reflect in their level of skills and competencies the fact that teachers, educators, superintendents, and school boards are doing their job.
>
> These higher standards pretty much are being intuitively felt by the public is translating into a growing awareness by them of the need for specific accountability indices like CTBS. And school boards have in a large measure to be diagnosing the degree to which they have been successful themselves, and in fact developing plans whereby they are assessing through their own determination of indicators their own success in making the kinds of necessary instructional/administrative/organizational priority adjustments in their goals and objectives to more effectively demonstrate their meeting those standards.

***Section summary***. According to the superintendents interviewed, public expectations of the educational system have increased dramatically in the latter portion of the quarter century under study. The business community, the community at large, parents, students, and a variety of special interest groups have all added to the complexity of demands (at times conflicting) placed upon schools and superintendents. Of the highest overall concern was the perceived generally low level of skills and competencies of the students as measured by various performance indicators such as CTBS and high school graduation results, when compared across Canada or internationally. Superintendents also experienced pressure to meet non-academic expectations related to social issues, health issues, justice issues, moral issues, and resourcing issues. Because of the demands of both academic and non-academic expectations upon superintendents, although their own leadership tends to be evaluated by indicators of academic achievement, in reality they have very little opportunity to exercise academic leadership.

Superintendents tended to resent the international comparisons of student achievement which they perceived as unfair, because the "products" of an inclusive system in Newfoundland were being compared with those of elitist systems in other jurisdictions. If the mandate of the educational system has been broadened to include much more than academic objectives, then it follows that the system (and educational leadership) should be evaluated by more than academic standards.

*Changing Economic Conditions*

The changing economic conditions in the nation as a whole, and in the Province in particular, have been a major cause of changes in education, and changes in the role of educational leadership. In this general area of the study, superintendents made extensive comments, but it was often difficult to determine whether they were considering changing economic conditions as a cause of change, or as a part of the change in the role of the superintendent. Their perceptions and comments which seemed to deal with the changing economy as a part of the change in their own role were summarized in the Providing and Maintaining Funds and Facilities section of Chapter Five, and consequently this section is deceivingly brief. Also, as noted in that section in particular, in the minds of a number of interviewees, interrelationships were seen between the various components of the Williams framework, which indicated that although the framework appeared to be comprehensive, its individual components were not necessarily discrete. For example, one commented that changing economic conditions and specifically the loss of employment opportunities in the rural communities resulting from the cod moratorium, were an underlying cause of the current rural-to-urban shift in population, which is itself one of the changing population dynamics identified by others as a cause of change in the role of the superintendent.

***Boom years to depression***. There was unanimity among superintendents that by the end of the quarter century under study, the economy of the province was in a downturn. Several used the word "depression." That the change from economic growth to economic decline requires a change of mind set for administration was illustrated by the following comment from one superintendent:

> In the early '70s it was the [economic] boom. You had increasing population, increasing wealth. The gross domestic product in the United States and Canada was growing at an unbelievable rate -- almost exponentially. To-day we have the reverse. We no longer have a rapidly expanding economy. We no longer have a growing population. So, we're not into expansion, we're into contraction.
>
> Times of expansion are times of optimism, growth. Things are getting bigger, better. . . . So you have the problems of growth, which are essentially optimistic.

> To-day we have the problems of decline which are not happy ones. . . . So we're into closing schools, laying off teachers, trying to maintain programs at a high level even though the human and financial resources are declining.

Five superintendents, each in his own manner, pointed out that the prosperity and relative affluence of the boom years compounded the present problems they faced in the administration of their systems. Only one of these mentioned his thankfulness that his board had been able to resource most of their building needs before the real "crunch" came. Even in more prosperous times others were not as fortunate. And the real problem identified by these five had to do with the level of expectations created in the minds of their public by the growth and relative prosperity of the past -- expectations of government at all levels and in all departments -- expectations which continued to increase long after government resources had begun to decrease. The real question for superintendents was verbalized by one:

> And in the midst of [all those demands for greater services] the Newfoundland government is trying to answer to all of these things and do it with less money. . . .
>
> [But] we can't have it all. Now if we can't have it, what are we going to do without?

The superintendent from a rural Roman Catholic board recognized the problem and suggested a role for the superintendent in addressing it:

> In rural communities in Newfoundland and Labrador, I guess the pressure is on the superintendent to provide when people want gymnasiums, [when] they want more labs, and [when] they want more cafeterias, and the monies are just not there for them. And I suppose that's the issue he has to address with his board and with the parents -- just to let them know that.

And in his opinion, that message is beginning to register. "The boom years are over . . . and the climate is setting in now which is that . . . people are getting 'conditioned' that their . . . expectations are not going to be fulfilled because of the impact of cut backs and inflation and almost a recession in North America." No other superintendent expressed a similar thought. Rather one observed the "irony" of a situation which he observed in a region especially hard hit by the cod moratorium. He observed that the

level of expectations which parents hold for themselves to provide for their children appears to continue unreduced, in spite of drastically reduced family incomes:

> If I could localize it again -- almost the whole [economic] infra-structure [in my district] is based on the fishery and fishery related economics. We have taken a major down turn in the last few years there. . . . There is not as much money there now.
>
> [And] I would assume that there is not as much money in the pockets of a lot of Newfoundland parents right now as there was because of the way the economy is. But the irony in it is that children seem to have at least on the surface just as much money as they always had. They're still buying their $85 pair of jeans, and their $140 joggers, and their leather jackets, and so on.

He went on to identify peer pressure as a possible cause, to wonder what was actually being cut out at home, and to question the priorities of parents under such circumstances. But again, inflated expectations appeared to be a major factor.

***Escalating and competing demands for services.*** Much of what was summarized under the Demand for Higher Standards section earlier in this chapter had to do with increasing expectations for service within the education system itself. But three superintendents commented to the effect that escalating and competing demands upon government for non-educational services was having the effect of reducing the level of funding available to education. One commented simply that the "dollar can't be spread equally well across a dozen different issues." The second indicated that since funding formulas for education were student-population driven, there was a need to revise the formula in light of declining enrolments, if programs were going to be maintained.

The most insightful comment came from a Roman Catholic superintendent who identified a competition for government dollars between education, and health care and pensions, for example. He stated:

> We examined [government spending on education vs. government spending on health care] in our brief to the Royal Commission. You have fewer people who are committed to education because [as] the population ages, you have a lot of people out there but fewer and fewer of them have children at school. So the advocacy group [for education] is not as great. There is of course the diversion of resources that results into health . . . into pensions.

***Government cut-backs and/or restructuring***. Three comments were included in this sub-section. These were comments in addition to those included with the description of role changes in the previous chapter. One superintendent commented about the reduction in substitute teacher days to allow for in-service for an aging teaching force. A second commented about difficulties in staffing shrinking schools with ever fewer teachers, and the additional difficulties resulting from transferring redundant teachers from community to community in his far flung board.

The third, a Roman Catholic superintendent, took a positive attitude toward the possible future reduction in the number of school boards within the province: "But there is no good reason why we need 27 educational districts in this province. . . . You know there are 9 Roman Catholic districts but 17 Integrated districts -- same geography."

***Section summary***. As delineated in this section, and also as discussed in the "Providing and Maintaining Funds and Facilities" section of Chapter Five, superintendents agreed that they were subjected to immense pressures to meet expectations and demands for services which have not decreased even though the resources available to provide them have been sharply reduced by changing economic conditions. The relative prosperity and affluence of the earlier part of the quarter century has created a level of expectations for education which the public is loathe to give up, and which serve to widen the gap between what is desired and what is possible for school boards to provide.

### *Changing Social Conditions*

Superintendents identified a number of different forces and trends which are discussed in this section as "changing social conditions." As was suggested in the previous section, often interrelations were observed among the factors identified -- one cause of change producing another cause of change, as well as sometimes being in itself a change deserving of comment. And there were evident connections between this section and the previous chapter -- most apparent in the areas of "superintendent-school board relations," "decision making," and providing for "special education".

***Human rights***. During the analysis process, the comments of ten superintendents were grouped into this sub-section. Those of two Roman Catholic interviewees were

very similar and comprise a definition of the new social mandate for schools -- inclusive education. The first said:

> Is our expectation of the public school system the same as it was 25 years ago? Right now our expectation . . . is much broader. We're expecting the education service to be custodial. We're expecting it to be all-inclusive to the need of any particular child. We're expecting it to teach all manner of curricula, and to provide safe [environment]. We're looking at the schools to give kids nourishment, school lunch programs. We're looking at schools to provide public health objectives. So, you know, the definition of the school is much broader now than it was years ago.

The second elaborated on "inclusive" education:

> As our education system has become more inclusive, the services required for that on a per pupil basis become very expensive -- you know, the hearing impaired, the visually impaired, educational psychologists, speech pathologists, SMH units, SPD units, special ed -- This is inclusive, right?
>
> These are expensive on a per pupil basis -- these are very expensive services. We have to have bussing now for these severely handicapped children. . . . When I began teaching in 1962 up until the 1970s, I had never seen a severely physically and/or mentally handicapped child. [I] never saw a "special ed" child [in school].
>
> Children with severe learning problems just didn't last. The drop out rate meant that by grade eight or grade nine they were gone. One didn't have to worry about handicapped access etc., etc., etc. The curriculum had essentially not changed. Contrast that to to-day in which our drop out rate now has meant that many children who would previously have left the school remain in the school. They are young offenders, emotionally disturbed children. Also in school are all the children who previously would have been elsewhere -- severely physically and mentally handicapped. . . .
>
> The school district . . . has to provide an educational program which is radically different from what it would have been 20 years ago in which you would have just focused upon the survivors.

Asked to describe how such a change has impacted the work that the superintendent does from day to day, he replied:

> There is more juggling. There are more stakeholders. There are more people to be consulted. If one looks at the continuum of services, you now have to provide services to the gifted at one end of the continuum as well as services to severely mentally handicapped at the other end of the continuum. In terms of the allocation of resources, you have a lot of tension, you have a lot of special interest groups.

Three other superintendents specifically mentioned the emergence of pressure groups or lobby groups as a social change which had impacted and was continuing to impact their roles. They together with others identified social issues with which they were having to deal. Significant social issues in addition to those referenced by the two superintendents quoted earlier in this sub-section included: status of women, gender equity, homosexuality, AIDS, divorce, and providing condom machines for students. The Child Welfare Act and the Human Rights Act were identified as delineating certain rights which impacted the role of superintendents. And people are more aware of their rights. According to one of the longest-tenured superintendents in the study:

> People have a heightened awareness of their rights. And while it's always been our method of operation that you try to do what people want in as far as you can do that (and what they need), in the early 1970s decisions could have been made even if they weren't what they wanted. You could make those decisions then, but you have to be a little more careful in making them now, because people are very much aware of what their rights are.

In a unique but significant response, the superintendent of an Integrated board pointed out what he felt was an unfortunate side-effect of this heightened awareness of individual and human rights:

> The issue of social conditions and the rise in the degree to which human rights have been protected in the various kinds of support legislative documents, has created a heightened sensitivity among superintendents almost to the point of paranoia, where some superintendents and school boards have abdicated the kind of definitiveness with which they should be pursuing organizational goals . . . and unfortunately their heightened sensitivity to the political pressures (for example human rights) is such that we have a reaction in education now called "crisis in the classroom" where it appears that a large number of students in their liberal interpretation of what were their civil rights, have gone over too far to a liberal interpretation, which has resulted in teachers backing off any kind of firm, definitive, disciplinary kind of punitive action with students to such an extent that the population of students in certain sectors . . . have the understanding that for the most part teachers can't be highly directive.

He went on to describe what he envisioned as the "disenfranchisement of boards, superintendents, and educators from their own legal rights" as a result of their natural desire to avoid confrontation, to find security.

***Changing morals***. The comments of superintendents relating to changing morals are discussed in this sub-section, as a changing social condition. Seven superintendents made comments relative to this specific sub-topic, and a number of them referred to certain social issues as "moral issues." Interestingly, the view of certain social issues as "moral" issues was more strongly held by Roman Catholic superintendents than by those of the Integrated boards.

One Roman Catholic superintendent stated flatly that the question of installing condom machines in his schools "Is not going to be an issue. Simply put, it isn't going to be an issue." From another Roman Catholic board, the superintendent indicated how he had to be sensitive to certain issues of right and wrong:

> When you're teaching religion in particular, and social studies -- any subject, but particularly in religion, you have to be aware of the kids that you have there. Now you just can't go up and say divorce is -- BANG. You know what I mean? You still have to say divorce is wrong (OK I'm talking from a Catholic perspective). Divorce is wrong, but it happens. You've got to try to live with it with those kids in school, and teachers have to have sensitivity. Our teachers have to be much more sensitive now to all these social, political, and economic things in their classes.

A third Roman Catholic superintendent indicated that in his board, greater sexual freedom for the young was not much of an issue, but

> Still it is an issue, for example in the whole area of human sexuality and AIDS and condom issues such as you hear on the media, there is pressure from parents to comply. . . . You know philosophically, morally we believe that the ideal should be taught to our students -- the ideal of abstinence and the ideal of what's morally right and wrong. But we also give them the information, and hopefully they will take the ideal. . . .

And a fourth Roman Catholic superintendent listed AIDS, abuse, homosexuality, and abortion as social issues which he was being pressured to deal with at the school level. He said:

> I . . . think that society is really leaving a lot to the school. . . . Right now, I see society saying, "Oh boy, we want you to deal with AIDS, we want you to deal with abuse and homosexuality and we want you to deal with -- "
>
> So that's a struggle, because all these things are important to society. They're not only important to the individual child and family. . . . Some of them are actually moral issues for our board in terms of the abortion

> issue and all of those -- but they're struggles for kids in their own heads, and [for] teachers.

The superintendent of a large urban Integrated board simply acknowledged that at present "there are more unwed mothers . . . there is more divorce . . . and probably more violence" than there was. His colleague from a more rural setting described the process of dealing with the issue of condom machines in schools. In the process of developing a board policy, he involved representatives from "the Salvation Army, the Anglican, and the United Church," but "right off after talking with the Department of Health, public health officials, health nurses, and so on," he concluded that "this must be addressed as a health issues rather than simply a moral issue." He explained:

> We have to approach it from the point of view that it is a health issue. And I find that from talking with public health officials, they have taken the thing from the point of view that it's strictly a health issue and that's all it is. Children are out there and they're going to be promiscuous anyway, a very high percentage of our students 14- and 15- and 16-years-old are engaging in intercourse and sex, so we have to make sure that they are safe.
>
> But we don't want to look at it totally from that point. We want to bring a balance to it. We want to look at it as a moral issue, a social issue, a health issue, and any other -- from all perspectives in other words.

A third superintendent of an Integrated board commented on changing social conditions in a positive light. He used the example of a female student becoming pregnant. It used to be that she would be quietly sent home

> and nobody would know anything about it. Now, you give the young girl a chance. She's pregnant, she comes to school. She writes her grade 12 exams, and perhaps two months later she has a child. You know, that's accepted by the high school. I don't think that's degrading. I don't think that's immoral.

***Dysfunctional families***. From one of the largest boards in the province, the superintendent made this comment:

> I am dealing with more problems now than I've ever dealt with before from the point of view of problems created as a result of divorce, the families being separated, and what's happening with the children and so on. I remember, very seldom if ever, when I became superintendent in [the 1970s], did I have to deal with single parents, did I have to deal with people who were divorced, did I have to deal with kids who were going

> through a very difficult period of time because their parents were divorced. That hardly ever came up.
>
> There is hardly a week goes by, right now, that I am not informed about or involved with or become aware of some school where a child is having problems because of family life -- let me put it that way.

From another part of the province, and a medium-sized board, the superintendent commented that dealing with the problems created by dysfunctional families was placing a "tremendous demand on the time" of his two school psychologists. He then added that "It's demanding some of my time. At least seeing that services are directed in that direction." His colleague from a smaller board indicated that according to details provided at Kindergarten registration, 25% of his KG class were students from homes that had experienced family break up. In his opinion, the break down of "trust in the church, trust in government, and trust in the establishment" resulted from the break up of the family, violence in families, and influences of television. He indicated, in addition, that teachers were not exempt from family problems:

> Once or twice a year some staff member will come into my office and just burst into tears about some problem that's happening. Sometimes it's related to the classroom or the school, and I can go and help. Other times it's related to their own personal lives. . . . I find that's happening more and more, and I guess that it's coming from a lot of stress at the school level, stress in the classroom, but also stress from their own personal lives: family break up and the kinds of trouble that their children are getting into.

And from another large board, the superintendent indicated by way of example that he and his assistant spent hours one afternoon "Dealing with in succession major issues involving the safety and the quality-of-life with respect to a child, and then a teacher, and then another teacher -- in terms of criminal activities." He claimed: "That wasn't here 25 years ago." He began his comments by saying:

> We look at the tremendous increase in dysfunctionality amongst families. I think we've got some major socio-ed[ucational] issues and phenomena that we have to grapple with, and if we don't do it intentionally and in an up front manner I think the quality of our life tomorrow is going to be much much less.
>
> And I think that spills right over on the superintendent.

An interesting cause-effect relationship between two of the components of the study's conceptual framework was advanced by one interviewee. He saw economic causes as one of the sources of the dysfunctionality of families, and he was not blaming low income solely. Rather, living in an area hard hit by the cod moratorium, he believed that new stresses were being placed on families as a result of having fathers at home full time, fathers who, heretofore, had virtually lived on the ships.

> Looking at social conditions of students [in his district] a very high percentage of children growing up never really knew their father, never really had a father. So households were mainly run by mothers, and a lot of those mothers worked in the fish plant. . . .
>
> Parents -- fathers were gone for the vast majority of time, highest percentage of time, and a lot of them when they actually came in, rather than going in and spending time with children and their wives and family may spend that time drinking in a pub.
>
> [When] all the fishery is shut down now, we have those fathers home. They're in the house for the first time in years and years and years . . . and they don't know what to be doing with themselves. And not only that, but their wives don't know what to be doing with them. And that's become almost as big a problem as the fact that they were gone all the time, because they're having real problems re-adjusting and coping with being on land.
>
> I think that even within the last couple of years we have seen in our schools more trying kids. Ironical as it may seem with the father home and not having the coping skills to handle a family or how to relate to children in a good many cases -- what you've got is frustrated fathers for example, frustrated mothers. Add to that . . . now they're on some moratorium package or something where the money is not nearly what they were making before, and the whole family concept of a lot of that part of the province has changed completely.
>
> And we're seeing it, and our guidance counsellors are handling it, and our therapists are handling it, and our psychologists are handling it; and it's escalated to the point where we've got mentally abused, physically abused children coming into our system. It's something brand new to us. . . . It's not something that you would have expected.

***Child protection issues***. Five superintendents identified a number of child protection issues -- neglect (hunger), sexual abuse, and harassment by other children. One spoke of children "sentenced to school" by the courts, and another of the

expectations/demands of the Social Services Department of government. The implications of this for superintendents were summarized in the words of a third:

> And more and more . . . policies are demanded that never were in existence before; like not only accountability, but accountability in areas like child abuse procedures, crisis management procedures, sexual harassment procedures, strike management. All of these are impacting the role of the CEO much more than they did a few years ago.

A fourth superintendent spoke of his board's policies relative to dealing with discipline of students. Principals deal with routine matters, more difficult ones go to the assistant superintendents, and only the most difficult cases come to him personally. But principals often consult him, wanting his support and approval in dealing with certain situations. Within this framework, this superintendent noted that discipline itself had changed. Educators now have to deal with the underlying issues:

> You've got to get down to the root of the problem. And that's the biggest difference in discipline. It ought to be the biggest difference. When I went to school, you did wrong, that was it. You "got it" and they didn't care what your reasons were or anything.
>
> But now you have to know about the reasons why kids do things. Some people think it's a "namby-pamby" policy, but it's not.

From a very large board, the superintendent made a list of public expectations for schools related to child protection, and then indicated a board adopted curricular strategy in response to those needs -- such as teaching conflict resolution in grade seven, peace education and multi-culturalism in grades three and four -- "tag-ons to established curriculum, and focused efforts that 25 years ago the demand wasn't there for."

But it was left to a recently-retired interviewee to verbalize the personal trauma associated with the reporting requirements of the Child Welfare Act. He saw superintendents as caught in a dilemma between the legal constraints of the Act to prompt reporting of any suspicions without investigating, and the human rights of the one to be reported should the allegation prove unfounded:

> The child abuse [issue] is one of the worst ones that I've ever dealt with. . . . It's picked up more than it was one time. And I think it always happened, but you have the legal aspect of it now, under Section 49 of the Child Welfare Act it must be reported immediately to Social Services, or indeed to the RCMP. It lands on your desk and you say: "You know, I have some problem believing it of that man." And you're

> not supposed to investigate, just supposed to report it right away, and the problem is, you know, suppose it didn't happen? You know what I mean? Should I send that man's name down the gutter if this didn't happen? So you're [forced] to investigate a little. . . .
>
> But the Act is saying you're not supposed to investigate. Let Social Services investigate. But the minute you give the name to Social Services, his name is there. . . . So you ponder it for two or three days, then in the mean time, you know: "I was supposed to report that."
>
> So several of these cases are on the go with all superintendents of school boards throughout the Province. And it is a messy one. . . .
>
> Now that's the things you go home and lose some sleep over . . . and wonder if you did the right thing.

***Poverty***. Poverty among the families of students was identified as a factor affecting the work and role of superintendents. Variously unemployment, low family incomes, and student hunger have affected student morale, and produced a variety of consequent problems for superintendents. However, the only comments actually grouped under this sub-topic were duplicates of those dealt with in other areas of the study -- yet a separate sub-heading was included in an attempt to provide a complete picture of the changing social conditions affecting students, education, and the role of the superintendent.

***Public demand for input***. Public demand for input into the educational and decision making processes constitutes a major force producing change in the role of the superintendent of education in Newfoundland. The comments of nine superintendents were grouped into this sub-section because they tended to emphasize "public demand for input" more as a cause of change than as a change in itself.

One interviewee who began his superintendency in 1969, speaking about public demand both as a change and as a cause of change, stated:

> I suppose the biggest change that I see -- now there were some big changes in building structure and new concepts of modernization in the school plant, there's no question on that -- but the biggest change that I saw was the parental involvement, the politics in education. I think that's the biggest change that I saw.

Other superintendents used phrases such as "people being more political," "lobbying groups," "advocacy groups," "pressure groups," and a "set of clients that demand." They spoke of more frequent and "extensive phone calls from parents," parents "starting

to get involved more and more," and parents' willingness to "tolerate" certain conditions more than others. One superintendent with long tenure articulated: "The whole system in which the school system operates has become highly politicized, but has also become highly socially sensitive and it has become highly legally sensitive."

The pressures placed by these groups upon the system and upon superintendents has not really eroded the power of superintendents, but it has radically altered the manner in which they effect decisions. According to one superintendent, a new kind of power -- "distributed power" -- has evolved, as the following quotation illustrates:

> It's that distributed power which be-devils any type of public administration to-day. The consultation process now can be exhaustive.
>
> It's more than communication. It's negotiation. . . [on] anything of significance.
>
> To a certain extent yes, [I'm talking about collaborative decision making], and to a certain extent no; because many groups believe that they have "veto" power.

Another superintendent gave an example of the power of the public in causing administration to act -- in this case introducing a French Immersion program in his board:

> The board wanted it, and the public wanted it, and the pressure groups were there; so it came [to be] for political reasons as opposed to educational reasons. And we are now in the process of reviewing the whole French Immersion issue, and having to review it in light of the mistakes that we did make as a result of probably possibly introducing it too quickly.

Public pressures for change were summed up rather succinctly by a recently retired superintendent who had had "a very politically effective lobby group" in his area -- a group "successful beyond their wildest dreams, and ours" in securing educational services for handicapped children. His words deal with both cause and effect:

> Probably the business of people being more political -- I'm talking like school trustees, home and school people and so on being more politically astute -- knowing where the pressure points are, and knowing how to bring pressure on government. All of that has put new things into action.
>
> Well, I think that these people have ended up on your doorstep; and you know what kind of power that they do have, and you respond to it. Government responds to it too. . . .

> I don't like responding to pressure, any more than the government does and I guess that in the long run, I'd try to avoid it if I could . . . -- you know, you never make just a political decision, there's an economic decision behind it, there's a humanitarian decision behind it [and so forth].

***Legal constraints***. Only six superintendents made comments which during the content analysis process were included in this sub-section. There was a general consensus that the legal framework in which superintendents operate was, after twenty-five years, significantly more complex than it was in 1969, at the beginning of the study period. An interviewee who had spent the entire time as superintendent, looking at the legal framework from the administrative perspective made this statement:

> For the first few years I felt reasonably comfortable with the training that I had, in the sense that it was in the right area -- in education. I've often said . . . in recent years, that if I were to be starting now -- [and] wanted to be a superintendent, I would ensure that I had substantial training in law, because of the various demands that are made through the legislation that has come on the scene in recent years. . . .
>
> We didn't have a collective agreement when I started. It was a learning process to go through that to see where that fitted. . . .
>
> The human rights legislation has been a major factor, for example. Various codes that were perhaps there years ago, but insisted on in recent years to be enforced, and so on. . . .
>
> Building codes, accessibility codes, fire regulations -- these kinds of things that you need to be conscious of. And in the human rights legislation, in particular the rights of handicapped children.

Speaking of the rights of handicapped children, two other superintendents commented on the change in legislation reflected in the revisions to the Schools Act (consolidated 1990) that "students with handicaps, not 'may' but 'shall' be integrated." And three commented on the constraints imposed by the *Collective Agreements* between government and the teachers' union (or NTA). Regarding the impact of the Collective Agreements, one of these identified what he perceived as a major role change resulting from the first one signed in 1971, and the others subsequent to it:

> There was one other significant factor that happened in education in the province, which caused the centralization of control when it comes to hiring of teachers in particular, because that was done at the local level . . . up to the mid-1970s. . . . And that was the signing of the first *Collective Agreement* in 1971. At that point in time, you had to follow a collective agreement in hiring and dismissing of teachers, and it was

> almost impossible to have three or four hundred . . . school committees understanding the *Collective Agreement* and being able to administer the *Collective Agreement* at the local level. So, to avoid getting into a lot of grievances and so on, the *Collective Agreement* contributed to the centralization of control -- significantly, in my view.
>
> The *Collective Agreement* has certainly impacted the superintendent's role in the past number of years, because you have to be absolutely certain that your people that you've delegated responsibilities under the *Collective Agreement* are actually doing according to the *Collective Agreement*, because you're the one that ultimately has to face the grievance and the arbitration hearings. So a lot of the *Collective Agreement* I administer myself because of that.

A second of these three credited the teachers' union with being a causative force in the change to a more collaborative decision making style by school boards, although he indicated that, to some extent, both changes may have resulted from other common social causes. He didn't elaborate further on this.

Another interviewee, looking at the legal framework in which education and superintendents operate more from the perspective of the individuals who hold certain rights protected in law, had this to say:

> If you compare what legislative provisions were in place to protect the client in 1969 compared to where it is now, then honestly just the legislative impact would dictate that school boards and superintendents have a greater onus of responsibility up to understanding the legislative requirements, understanding the political sensitivities which sometimes are enhancing the legislative legal kind of rights; and the school boards simply have a different, articulate, familiar, understanding, and legally empowered set of clients that demand that certain things be done now as opposed to 1969.

***Section summary***. When the forces identified in this study were judged by frequency, length, and intensity of superintendents' responses, changing social conditions were found to have had the greatest impact on the role of superintendents of education in Newfoundland. A growing awareness of their rights as human beings has produced a more articulate, more demanding public. Probably the human rights movement, human rights legislation, and the emergence of a host of pressure groups have placed a multiplicity of varied new demands upon the education system and the superintendency. During the past 25 years, education has become an all-inclusive enterprise. Superintendents must do more juggling of resources, they must balance rights of the groups and sub-

groups within their constituencies, and they must respond to pressures for curricular change.

Families have changed. There is more divorce, there are more single parent families, due in part to economic or employment factors. There is greater freedom of sexual expression. Changing understandings regarding morality were viewed differently by superintendents of different religious denominations. Dealing with the consequences to children of family break up, family violence, sexual abuse, and neglect is taking more time at all levels within the school system, whether in developing programs aimed at prevention and self help, or in dealing with the outcomes and their impact on classroom learning and school life. And within the system itself discipline has changed, requiring significantly more time in dealing with problems at the level of causes rather than symptoms.

Changes in the legal framework within which superintendents work have made their role more complex. Legal requirements in the consolidated Schools Act to program for special needs; more clearly articulated rights in the Human Rights Act; the complexities of at least three Collective Agreements with employees; and building, fire, and health codes all place superintendents under tremendous pressure to be cognizant of requirements and to be highly dexterous in the discharge of their related duties.

### *Changing Population Dynamics*

Changing dynamics of the population have also impacted the role of the superintendent to a degree. None of the superintendents directly addressed the issue of an aging population, but a number commented regarding each of declining population, shifts in population, and level of educational attainment within the general population.

***Population shifts***. Five superintendents spoke about population movements or shifts which they believed had affected or would affect their role. The perspectives of rural superintendents were different from those serving in more urban boards. One superintendent from a rural board in which the district economy was based largely on primary industries, and in particular on the fishery, made the following comment, identifying a rural to urban shift of the better educated as a cause of changes in his role:

> It has been said, especially in rural Newfoundland that students who go for school and who do well leave, and they don't come back for the most part. They either migrate to a more urban centre in the province or out of the province all together. They get a good education, there's no jobs in rural Newfoundland. So they have to leave, they don't come back. They don't become part of [rural Newfoundland] society. They don't come in, for example, get married, have children, and continue on with the rural type society.
>
> Mainly the people who stay are those who probably didn't finish high school or who have fairly low educational levels, and that type of home affects my job in different ways, almost on a daily basis; because you don't have from that type of home the same value placed on education that you would have from homes where parents are better educated. Now that's true in rural Newfoundland. Statistics bear this out. The education level of the adult population there, in particular, is lower than it is in urban districts.

According to him, schools and superintendents in rural areas are working with a population which generally places a lower value on education, and hence are not as supportive of the education of their sons and daughters.

Two superintendents from largely rural boards commented that as the impact of the cod moratorium on the fishery began to be felt more deeply (it was a relatively recent event at the time interviews were being conducted), they expected to see, in the words of one, "an exodus of parents and kids from those communities directly affected . . . and that they would influx into major service centres." Both recognized the problems in forecasting future educational needs in their districts. Both expressed concerns for planning for dwindling student populations in their boards on the one hand, and for increasing student populations in other boards on the other hand. The second superintendent commented succinctly:

> I can see that that's going to be a major concern now especially with the fishery going. The families will be moving out of the isolated communities and looking for work elsewhere -- in the urban centres within the province or otherwise out of the province all together. I haven't experienced a lot of population shifts because of that, but I can see that that will be a concern. Should we be building a brand new school in this particular community? I know that perhaps 70% of the families of the students in my schools are dependent upon the fishery. So if that's the case and the fishery is not going to exist over the next four or five years for the communities in my district, then we should be taking a look at whether or not we're going to put a school in a certain area based on the

> population we've got there now, based on the population projections that we made for the next five years. [Our projections] will probably go out the window in the next 18 months.

Even within the larger urban boards, population shifts have been creating problems. Not just the increases caused by in-migration from the economically disadvantaged rural communities, but intra-urban shifts have increased the complexity of strategic planning for urban superintendents. Said one:

> Here in [this city, the population] is moving around. As a result it's putting . . . a financial squeeze on us, in the sense that school communities that were vibrant years ago, kids are moving from these areas to other neighbourhoods, and as a result we're left with buildings that are under utilized, and at the same time we're being faced with the demand to build new structures.

Similarly, another urban superintendent commented about the trend for families to move away from the centre of the city to the suburbs. However, he noted that within the last three or four years, in spite of continued growth in the suburbs, the inner-city schools, previously nearly empty, were again filling up; but not entirely because of population moving back again to the centre of the city. The additional factor underlying this phenomenon was a board strategy, as indicated in his comment which follows:

> People are now moving back into the centre of the city again. Our schools that we were just about ready to close out in the centre of the city, are blocked. . . .
>
> What is happening that we've done in the centre of the city is that we're offering programs that are attractive to people so that parents are bringing their kids in from the outlying area to do French Immersion and things like this. So, that's helping us.

***Declining population***. Only two factors causing the general decline in population were identified: families having fewer children, and the migrations of population from rural to urban and out of province most commonly for economic reasons. Illustrative of the general decline, three superintendents cited present student enrolments ranging from less than 50% to 70% of what their boards had had at the peak in the late 1970s. And one cited one of his largest schools as having only 35% of the student population of former days.

A total of nine superintendents discussed the consequences of declining population. Their comments generally were centred in three areas: closing and

amalgamating schools, providing adequate teaching staff, and problems associated with programming needs. Frequently, all of these have taken on political overtones. From a rural Roman Catholic board which experienced a decline of just over 30% since 1978, the superintendent commented:

> To-day we have [fewer] students, and of course that has its impact in the sense that as the decline goes you lose your teaching units, and of course your grants, previously per student. . . . As a result of that, our board had to close two schools, and realign five, and this is done for the best and for the good of the whole school system. But unfortunately there was a price to pay for it. There were a lot of demonstrations. . . .
>
> I'd say that [an enrolment] decrease creates more problems [than a similar increase would], more difficulties, because it means decreasing in teacher personnel and it means a decrease in programs. And that has its impact . . . expectations by parents, and by students, and by the community, not being met.

Another Roman Catholic superintendent previously cited in the "Decision making" sub-section of Chapter Five, spoke at length about the difficulties and politics associated with school closures resulting from declining enrolments. He along with every other superintendent interviewed expressed the conviction that what they were doing was the best for their students under the circumstances. A colleague from an Integrated board had worked systematically to create larger, more efficient schools, and he credited his transportation system (school bussing) with making this possible. Unlike the case of his colleague in whose school the population had dropped to only 35% of its earlier number, this superintendent had had other schools within bussing range which could be merged to create the desired larger institutions. Here are his comments:

> We have had significant student decline on the west coast of Newfoundland, and that has impacted particularly on the district, and that's the basic reason that we have closed so many schools during my tenure every year. The overall enrolment in the district has declined by more than 50%. . . .
>
> Now at the same time as you try to streamline and meet the demand for increased programs, you're also working with fewer dollars, because, of course, everything is done on a per-student basis. So in our view then, what we have to provide is increased opportunities for students, but in different schools. And as a result, when we move students into a receiving school, that receiving school is better than the school that they left. The program they offer is better, and the overall opportunities are

better. And for that reason, then, our transportation system is rather keyed to the kind of education that we offer.

The superintendent who spoke of that other school verbalized his strategy to deal with staffing reductions in schools which were being systematically down-sized.

> Reducing personnel, laying them off . . . cutting back. . . . People are used to that to some extent now. We're really good at it now. We're experts in decline. . . .
>
> [But] people want to keep what they have. . . . They would like to have the same number of special ed teachers as they had when they had [more than twice the number of students].
>
> You go through that all the time. You've always got these adjustments. You have to make sure you make the course adjustments every year. Otherwise you're left with a big adjustment in some year, and that really creates a lot of political problems, or publicity problems. So you have to make adjustments in your programming in [smaller increments].

The complications of juggling were really evident for the superintendent of a geographically diverse board. He was attempting to improve programming in a board in which some schools were growing while others were in decline. The resultant coping strategy was described in these comments:

> We have an increasing enrolment situation in [a particular city]. That . . . impacts the superintendent's role. . . . Because of an overall decline in the district, you're creating a reduction in the total number of teachers in a given year. . . . This year we're losing eight teaching units because of declining enrolments. And not only do we have to take these eight teaching units out of the school [system], we also have to take nine or ten units out of the schools that are declining, because we have to give a unit or two to [the city] which is increasing.
>
> So you've got these complications, and the superintendent certainly has to be involved in that process.

***Level of educational attainment of public***. In addition to role changes related to the expanding knowledge base of the typical board member (Chapter Five), three superintendents made comments which treated the level of educational attainment of the public as a cause of changes in the role of the superintendent of education. Two explained that the individuals now serving on the urban boards were very often professionals such as lawyers, doctors, and business people; and even in more rural settings people such as the public health nurse, social workers, and people who work

with the Fisheries Department. Speaking about the public in general and not just board members, the superintendent from a small mostly-rural board made these remarks:

> Globally, I think the major cause of change in the role of the superintendent is that we have a better educated public than we ever had before, in Newfoundland. A quarter of a century ago, we had a lot of illiterates in our province -- parents who were uneducated and so on. And they looked at teachers and school principals and superintendents and all these people as: "They know what they're doing, so I don't ask any questions. Whatever they do is right. . . ." If the child did something wrong in the school, the parents supported the teacher, blindly almost.
>
> Right now, it's completely different. We've got a different public out there. We've got a public out there now that are asking questions. We've got a public out there now that are making greater demands on educators. And we have to respond to these demands. It's not good enough to issue orders and directions and assume it's going to be done. You're going to be asked "why?" now by the public.

***Section summary***. Superintendents generally agreed that population migrations and shifts, a generally declining population, and the general level of educational attainment of their publics had impacted their role, producing a number of changes. Migrations from economically disadvantaged areas to the larger centres, and shifts of populations within those centres had made strategic planning extremely complex by producing dwindling student populations in some regions and growth in student numbers in others. Superintendents were forced to deal with the problems of down-sizing, from dwindling resources and smaller staffs, to school amalgamations and closures, and at the same time attempt to maintain the programming levels expected by a more demanding, more articulate, better educated public.

Declining populations, whether caused from out-migrations or smaller families, forced superintendents to devise creative strategies to deal with the associated problems. Merging schools, use of bussing, offering desirable programs in under-utilized schools, and regular incremental cut-backs were named. And while doing what they conscientiously believed was best for their students, superintendents were often forced to deal with the unfavourable reactions of those negatively affected.

*Changing Technology*

During the development of the study, it had been anticipated that changing technology would be a major force producing changes in the role of the superintendent of education in Newfoundland. Judging from the number and length of comments which dealt with changing technology, and from their nature, although superintendents regarded it as a significant force, its impact on their role was definitely secondary to changing social conditions and changing economic conditions presented earlier in this chapter. Their comments regarding changing technology are presented in two sub-sections: impact on administration, and impact on curriculum.

***Impact on administration***. In all, during the analysis process the comments of ten superintendents were placed in this sub-section. Two major themes emerged: technology as a facilitator of work, and technology employed for exchange of information. The various species of technological innovation which were identified as impacting administration, beginning with the most frequently mentioned were computers, facsimile machines, telephone, photocopiers, and E-mail.

The superintendents of two of the largest urban boards in the Province made very similar comments regarding the use of computers to link their schools and their offices. One had begun and the other was about to begin to use computers for the many reporting responsibilities of schools to board and to a lesser degree board to Department. They spoke of sharing business functions such as supplies requisitions and financial records between school and board by computer. They also spoke of monitoring student progress via computer at the board office, sending memos to principals via E-mail, and submitting their own memos and rough drafts of reports and letters to their secretaries via computer. Along with his dreams, one commented about the financial burdens associated with all of this technology:

> [Technology] has made a tremendous difference in our schools -- adding to expense and eating up a lot of funds. Computers is a major one there. We're having real problems trying to get enough of funds to put computers in schools. We're trying to get some money together the last two or three years to do that, and we're being fairly successful. That's two major changes right there. I mean, the photocopier, that eats money up just like it spits paper out.

> Every one of our schools is going to have fax machines within another two or three months. We're all going to have computers that we're going to be connected to from board office. I'm going to be able to communicate with every one of my schools from a computer on my own desk. We're all going to be able to do that. I mean that's going to make a tremendous difference. In stead of me having to send a memo out now, I'll simply put it in my computer, put it in my E-mail and send it to my principals.

Another superintendent commented on the availability of information requisite for good financial management and effective strategic planning:

> [Previously] the superintendents did not appear to have at their disposal the tools to provide them with the information [needed for strategic planning]. For example, the reading of our financial statements was anywhere from 30 to 60 days out of date.
>
> The same thing applies to a whole raft of other areas of information. It would seem to me you can't be responsible for what's going on, if you don't know what's going on. You can't be responsible for the finances of to-day if you don't know what they are.
>
> It's instantaneous now. . . . The financial status of the district, I can find out within 24 hours. We now have a fix on our enrolment projections to the year 2003. As soon as a child is born, or as soon as a child is baptized in one of our churches, that comes to our attention, and it gets built into the mix, so . . . we know all the Kindergarten classes now until 1998. [Technology] makes life interesting. But it makes a lot of things possible.

The comments of five superintendents related specifically to what one of them called "the faster pace of information exchange," and the pressures associated with expectations for a quicker response to a communication. A second superintendent who had served the entire quarter century in the position said:

> Well, let me put it in a quaint way. Years ago I'd get a letter from the Department on a Monday. They had to mail it on a Thursday. And I always had a week to get information ready.
>
> Now, it comes in. Some days I get the same thing coming in at ten after nine, I fill it in and send it on at half past nine. At two they're back to ask for additional information and I've got to have it back.
>
> So you know what I mean? I've got to move faster. I have got to move faster.

His colleague commented about the impact of technology on his personal productivity. "So I think I am much more productive in the run of a day than I was in the earlier years

just because of equipment and experience." But he also spoke about another pressure created by technology:

> I used to have my desk clear at one time, but there is no way now that I could possibly read everything that goes over my desk. . . . Computers have made it a lot easier to generate material, and as a result there is much more material generated, and [many] more ideas and reports and new developments that are quickly generated, quickly shared. So you get these, and I find it gets on my desk and you get a guilt complex if you don't get it moving.
>
> Oh, yes. [Technology may save you time when it's writing letters, but it's multiplying the ones you have to read.] It certainly speeds up the generation of quality material and programs and communications and as a result it increases the amount of work. It's paralleled. It enlarges the work capacity and also it makes more work for you.

Another superintendent identified a third and a fourth pressure created by technology. Looking at the rapidly changing array of computer hardware and programs available, and at the financial implications of resourcing for technological improvement, he stated:

> I think there is terrific pressure on professional educators to keep up to date with respect to information that's available, with respect to the kind of technology that's available. You're expected to be familiar with all kinds of various software packages, know all the buzz words in the area in terms of hardware.
>
> [Then] there's budget pressures because of the technology. The technology is available, and you're expected to probably have a lot of the technology available for your staff and for your system.

***Impact on curriculum***. According to seven superintendents, technology has had significant impact on the curriculum. Most, but not all of the comments made related to computers specifically, and most were positive in import. Three individuals made reference to the computer as a tool of teaching. They expressed concerns that most schools and educators were failing to realize the vast potential of computers as a learning tool across all disciplines, "giving access to a much broader field of thought and development." In this area they looked for changes in the future. One of these speculated that the new methods using computers while providing for "tremendous gains" might "signal the end of the traditional school system where a child leaves his house and goes to school for five hours a day."

A number of commenters touched two negative aspects of technology and the curriculum. Said one: "Technology cuts back on work. You get rid of a lot of back-breaking labour -- with large power scoops instead of pick and shovel, for example." That has translated into a lot of lost jobs in what was traditionally a resource based economy, and created a morale problem for many students who question the value of getting an education in preparation for jobs that aren't going to be there when they graduate. In the words of a western superintendent:

> [Technology] has taken away some of our students' optimism. Back in 1970, basically every kid could have a job.
>
> We had a resource based economy. There was very little mechanization. So in the woods around here, and at the paper mill there was massive employment. Road building, construction, the fishery was not yet mechanized so all the resource industries were labour intensive.
>
> Take a look at that to-day -- to-day the technology has impacted quite negatively on job opportunity here in Newfoundland.

Noting with some concern the increasing emphasis being placed on technological education as a means of increasing national prosperity and superiority, the second negative impact was identified by another superintendent. He warned of the danger of losing the "intellectualism in our schools." He went on:

> There is a danger there. You know, where are the poets? Where are the song writers? Where are the musicians coming from? Where is the artist? Why is history important. . . ? And I think we're getting caught up too much in all of this technology. . . . This world is not totally about making money.

However, it was in the area of resourcing and programming for computer education where the role of the superintendent has been most definitely affected, "in the sense that we're involved with it, and seeing that it's there in place, and that it works." It was the superintendent of a small rural board who most clearly articulated his new role in this regard:

> I'm not a computer "nut" for example, if you want to talk strictly about computers. But I firmly believe that we have to do our darndest to keep up with the ever-changing technology in our district. I guess the biggest frustration that I have again, stems from the financial incapability in trying to keep up with the changing technology in our district.

> We have hired for the last two years a program co-ordinator full time in technology who keeps abreast. . . . And we have developed a 4 or 5 year educational technology plan for our district. In other words not only where are we now, but where do we want to be in 3 years time, in 4 years time, 5 years time?

***Section summary***. According to the superintendents interviewed, changing technology had impacted and was continuing to impact their role. Administration at the board office and at the school level was at one and the same time made easier, and more difficult. In recent years, technological devices such as the computer and facsimile machines had greatly facilitated the maintaining and reporting of financial and achievement records; the writing/preparation of letters, reports, and other documents; and the exchange of information. Up to the minute financial information, and descriptive demographics stored in data bases facilitate strategic planning. Information is available almost instantaneously, and is expected just as quickly -- the turn around time between hard-copy query and response and follow up query that would have involved days and weeks 25 years ago, is now reduced to just minutes or hours.

Technology has also impacted the curriculum. Although not presently utilized to their potential, electronic devices such as computers, modems, and photocopiers are opening up whole new areas of process and content to students. In addition they demand that new courses and programs be added to the curriculum in order for students to be able to manage them. And indirectly, by changing the very nature of present and future job opportunities, technology has forced a re-thinking of what is to be taught in schools.

Because much of modern technology is very costly, superintendents are placed under immense financial pressure when it comes to providing these things for both administration and student instruction. At the administrative level, the expectations for quick responses constitute another pressure. The facility with which all manner of documents can now be generated has multiplied the reading responsibility of superintendents, and multiplied the volume and scope of information for which they are held accountable. In addition, they require new skills to manage the new technology, and must also attempt to keep abreast of the technology explosion and know what is available on the market and how it might be of advantage to their system.

### *Chapter Summary*

Chapter six has presented the study findings regarding causes of changes in the role of the Superintendent of Education in the Province of Newfoundland. Following the topical outline of the specific conceptual framework of the study, the five areas of findings were (a) the demand for higher standards, (b) changing economic conditions, (c) changing social conditions, (d) changing population dynamics, and (e) changing technology. These five areas were found to be comprehensive in scope but not necessarily discrete in nature, as a number of superintendents saw interrelationships among them. All of these areas comprised major forces impacting the role, but judging from frequency of and length of responses, and from the intensity with which issues were generally addressed, changing social conditions and changing economic conditions have had the greatest impact.

The business community, the community at large, parents, students and a variety of special interest groups all hold expectations of the educational system and superintendents. Superintendents at times resent certain international comparisons of student achievement, because in spite of the inequity of comparing the "products" of Newfoundland's now all-inclusive system with other very elitist systems, these comparisons are perceived to include higher expectations for system performance. A number of superintendents expressed their frustrations at the conflict between expectation for high standings in international academic comparisons, and expectation for all students to remain in school and to complete high school. Besides high expectations for scholarship, Newfoundland superintendents must also deal with an ever-widening circle of expectations in non-academic areas of community, school, and social life as well.

The relative prosperity and affluence of the earlier part of the quarter century has created a level of expectations for education which the public has been reluctant to give up, and which serve to widen the gap between what is desired and what is possible for school boards to provide. Hence, the changing economic conditions have added greatly to the frustration felt by superintendents.

Increased recognition of human rights as provided in legislation, and a more articulate and demanding public are among the changing social conditions impacting the role of the superintendent. The family unit is gradually disintegrating and finding itself

less able to fill its historic role as the basic unit of society for character development in the young. Many of its former responsibilities are left to schools, with limited success. Generally, schools cannot prevent problems but rather must deal with the consequences of family break-up, family violence, sexual abuse, and neglect. School discipline has changed, requiring significantly more time in dealing with problems at the level of causes rather than attempting to control symptoms. Human rights, family law, and school discipline, together with labour law and numerous other codes and regulations, have become a part of the increasingly complex legal framework surrounding education, all multiplying pressures upon the superintendent to comprehend constraints, and to be most adroit in working within the confines of the law.

There was general consensus among superintendents that population migrations and shifts, generally declining population, and the general level of educational attainment of their publics had impacted their role, producing a number of changes. Major or unanticipated migrations and shifts of the population created barriers to strategic planning, and the overall reduction in the number of students forced painful decisions upon superintendents as they attempted to maintain programs in spite of dwindling resources and reduced numbers of teachers. Amalgamating of schools, use of bussing, offering desirable programs in under-utilized schools, and regular incremental cut-backs were named as coping strategies by various superintendents.

The rapidly changing technology of recent years has impacted both administration and curriculum. For administration, computers and facsimile machines have facilitated record keeping, supplies requisitioning, reporting, communication, and strategic planning. But such tools have increased expectations for both quantity and quality of work, and have drastically reduced the expected turn around time for correspondence. At the curriculum level, technology is becoming increasingly important to both the processes and content of education. It has changed the nature of present and future job opportunities, necessitating a re-definition of the curriculum in response. In addition, courses must be added to teach the use of these new technological tools. And superintendents are placed under added pressure to process increased paper flow, to provide technological tools at both administrative and curricular level, to resource all

these changes, and to become expert themselves in understanding all that is involved in the technology explosion.

These are the factors and forces which have combined to change the role of the superintendent of education in Newfoundland. They have produced a profusion of pressures to which superintendents have been forced to respond, creating a changed role over the quarter century.

## Chapter Seven

# Summary, Conclusions, and Implications

This study of the changing role of the Newfoundland superintendent of education was quite broadly focused, and subjects' responses proved to be rather wide-ranging in scope. In this chapter are presented the summary, conclusions, and implications of the study, in three divisions.

### *Summary*

An overview of the study's purpose, method, and findings are presented in this division of the chapter.

#### *Purpose of the Study*

The changing role of the Newfoundland superintendent of education was designed as a descriptive-historical study for the purpose of examining changes in the role of superintendents of education in the province of Newfoundland over the approximate quarter century between two Royal Commissions -- the Warren Royal Commission which released its report in two parts in 1967, and the Williams Royal Commission which released its report in 1992. The actual focus of the study was on the time period between the serious implementation efforts culminating in the 1969 Schools Act, and 1994. This was reflected in the major research question: *"How has the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland changed since its definition in the 1969 Schools Act?"*

The study was further guided by the three sub-questions which follow:

1. What are the *present role expectations* associated with the office of superintendent of education in Newfoundland?
2. What are the perceptions of Newfoundland superintendents regarding the *nature of changes* in their role since 1969?
3. What are the perceptions of Newfoundland superintendents regarding the *causes of changes* in their role since 1969?

*Study Method*

The research employed two concurrent methods of data collection: questionnaire survey and semi-structured in-depth interview. The questionnaire used was the "Role of the District Superintendent" questionnaire developed and administered in Newfoundland by F. J. King in the spring of 1972. For this study, it was re-administered to all incumbent superintendents plus the four most recent retirees in the province in the autumn of 1993. This population comprised 30 individuals. Interviews were conducted with a stratified sample of fourteen of the same population. The sample was stratified on the basis of school board size, geographic region, and religious denomination. The interview schedule was pilot tested during the first half of 1993, yielding satisfactory results, some of which it was possible to incorporate into the main study. The remaining interviews were conducted in the autumn of 1993 and January 1994. The study achieved 100% return on questionnaires, and 100% co-operation in securing interviews requested of individual superintendents chosen according to the stratification criteria.

The questionnaires yielded two types of data. First, employing a 5-point Likert scale to rank the 114 role component/descriptors given, there was created a basic superintendent role profile of vital, probable, possible, improbable, and non-components by calculating mathematical means of weighted responses. These were supplemented by both solicited and unsolicited written-in responses, and further enhanced by interview data. And second, response means from the 1993 questionnaire were compared with those of 1972 to examine changes in the role of the superintendent over time.

The interviews were audio taped, and the transcripts analyzed. Comments were regrouped by subject, beginning with the subject headings suggested in the specific conceptual framework of the study. This framework was modified slightly during the process of content analysis, in order to accommodate the issues from the perspectives of the superintendents. The questionnaires were used primarily to provide a present role description of Newfoundland superintendents, and secondarily to identify changes in that role over time. Interview data were used primarily to identify and describe role changes over time, and to identify and explore the causes of those role changes; and secondarily to supplement the present role description.

*Study Findings*

The findings of the study are summarized in the three succeeding sub-sections, following the outline of the three research sub-questions of the study, as follows: (a) a description of the present role of the Newfoundland superintendent of education, (b) the nature of role changes since 1969, and (c) the causes of those role changes.

***A description of the present role of the Newfoundland superintendent.*** The findings regarding the expectations/nature of the present role of the superintendent of education in Newfoundland are based primarily on the questionnaire, and secondarily on the interview data.

The questionnaire data portrayed a role characterized by widely varied pressures and responsibilities. They showed that superintendents placed great emphasis on their relationship with their boards, and their personal administrative responsibilities at the board level and above. It was a general practice to delegate many of the duties of the superintendent to others on the superintendency team -- functions such as staffing, facility and financial management, and particularly in the larger boards, instructional leadership.

Superintendents attached primary importance to their relationship with their boards. In the related section of the questionnaire, they ranked 18 out of a possible 27 component/descriptors (67%) as "vital." These vital functions included advising the board on finances and policy, informing the board on educational issues, carrying out duties assigned, and responsibility for overall leadership and administration. Of secondary importance was the area of improving educational opportunity, with only 25% of the items ranked as "vital." Included among these vital component/descriptors were responsibility for maintaining and evaluating instructional quality, and for improving teaching and the educational system.

Most highly ranked in the area of providing and maintaining funds and facilities were responsibility for budgeting and responsibility for long-range planning for capital construction. In the area of obtaining and developing personnel, items which addressed responsibilities for hiring and firing of staff, and securing their co-operation in carrying out recommendations and policies were included. There were only two "vital" role component/descriptors in the maintaining effective community relations area, indicating major responsibility for communicating with the public and working on certain

committees. However, ranked next in the section was the only questionnaire item which mentioned the mass media, an area which interview data indicated constituted a major responsibility, especially in larger school boards.

From the interviews, it was the concept of "superintendency" as opposed to "superintendent" that was one of the most important findings of the study. This concept included the ideas of: (a) wide-ranging and overall responsibility, (b) delegation of authority and/or responsibility, (c) team work and team leadership -- the superintendent being team leader, (d) group involvement in decision making, and (e) duty to respond to public pressures (i.e. accountability). Present superintendents viewed themselves as being much more leaders of a superintendency team and much less "authoritarian" than their earlier counterparts.

Dealing with the expectations of parents, students, community, media, business, government and other groups of stakeholders has become a major component of the role of the present superintendent. The majority of superintendents' comments regarding expectations tended to focus on parents and local community, certain lobby groups, and local interests as they related to programming, accountability, accessibility, standards of achievement, student retention, school improvement, non-academic services, and overall program efficiency.

The nature of the power of the superintendent has changed during the quarter century. To-day's superintendents still have power, but power exercised in a different manner. They are able to lead only when others are willing to follow, and the skills and patience frequently necessary to secure that willingness now comprise a major part of that power. The phrases "servant leadership," "empowering of subordinates," and "distributed power," all represent aspects of that new power and the political dexterity with which present superintendents must ply the "art of the possible".

***Nature of changes in the role of the superintendent.*** The perceptions of Newfoundland superintendents regarding the nature of changes in their role since 1969 were drawn primarily from the interviews, and secondarily from the comparison of data between questionnaire responses of 1972 and 1993.

Comparative questionnaire results indicated that superintendents have assumed greater overall responsibility in the business and financial areas of running their schools.

Superintendents see their present role as more all-encompassing; although they are now more involved in delegation of responsibility, and they have greater autonomy within board policies than earlier in the study period. And, in spite of having no legal mandate, present superintendents more strongly believe that they should retain the right to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations.

Superintendents now assume less responsibility for approving orders for supplies and equipment; and none are now members of the teachers' professional organization. They are now less likely to be involved in school level public relations activities; and less likely to be involved in professional negotiations involving the teachers' "union," as the Newfoundland Teachers' Association is frequently called.

The interviews indicated that in the perception of superintendents, the year 1969 was the climax of a period of change rather than a precise point of change. There were new boards, new Denominational Education Councils, and before too long a Collective Agreement with teachers. The re-structuring of 1969 in effect created a new administrative level between the school level and the Department level. In this new administrative level, superintendents began to create a new role by practice, often producing tensions and distrust between the various "players" as old lines of authority and former responsibilities were replaced by newer ones.

Over the quarter century, board members gradually became more educated, more sophisticated, more involved in the administration process, and assumed greater responsibility for the actions of the board. The process of making decisions changed, from an "advise and consent" ritual to a more consultative approach. By 1994, superintendents exercised leadership more as influencing or guiding rather than directing their boards.

In relation to programming and staffing, superintendents must now deal with greatly increased expectations, pressures which were significantly less or non-existent a quarter century ago. The increased demand for special education services has surpassed any associated increase in resources. Also, the personnel function of the superintendency has changed. As the number of board based personnel has increased, superintendents spend more time and effort in making appointments to their own office staff, and have

had to develop new inter-personal skills as they co-ordinate the new larger "organisms" into which their board offices have evolved.

The emphasis in staffing schools has changed from simply filling teaching positions to securing the best qualified individual based on a careful needs assessment. The emphasis in professional development has changed from encouraging and assisting teachers in obtaining their first degree to the developing and refining of specific skills required to meet specific program and/or student needs. And in keeping with the new emphases, superintendents themselves require a greater understanding of the skills needed by teachers.

There was strong consensus among those interviewed that the housing and resourcing of education in Newfoundland has changed over the quarter century. Approximately the first half of the study period was a time of growth, characterized by almost frenzied activity in construction in some areas of the Province. The latter portion was a time of declining enrolments and dwindling resources -- requiring different management skills on the part of superintendents. In particular, the discretionary income of boards has been reduced, forcing superintendents to be very creative in order to respond to even a portion of the escalating demands for programming and services which continue to be placed on their schools.

Superintendents indicated that communication is key to maintaining effective community relations. Over the quarter century, the importance of appropriately managing relationships with the media has increased immeasurably, especially in larger boards. Usually, superintendents reserve to themselves the role of media spokesperson. They indicated that it was important to be able to exploit the media for their own purposes, "to get their message out".

***Causes of changes in the role of the Newfoundland superintendent since 1969.*** The findings of the study in relation to perceptions of superintendents regarding causes of changes in their role over the past quarter century were drawn exclusively from interview data. Following the topical outline of the study's specific conceptual framework, the five forces for change were (a) the demand for higher standards, (b) changing economic conditions, (c) changing social conditions, (d) changing population dynamics, and (e) changing technology. Although all of these areas comprised major

forces impacting the role, judging from frequency and length of responses, and from the intensity with which specific issues were generally addressed, changing social and changing economic conditions have had the greatest impact.

Expectations for the educational system are held by the business community, the community at large, parents, students and a variety of special interest groups. To a degree, superintendents resent what are perceived as inequitable international comparisons of student achievement, because of within these comparisions are often included unfair higher expectations for system performance in Newfoundland. Besides higher expectations for scholarship, Newfoundland superintendents must meet a wide variety of non-academic expectations as well. They are concerned that if the mandate of the educational system is to be broadened to include more than academic objectives, then the effectiveness of the system (and its educational leadership) must be evaluated by more than academic standards.

The relative prosperity and affluence of the earlier part of the quarter century has created a level of expectations for education which the public has been reluctant to give up, and which serve to widen the gap between what they demand and what it is possible for school boards to provide. Hence the changing economic conditions have added greatly to the frustration felt by superintendents.

Increased recognition of human rights as provided in legislation, and a more articulate and demanding public are among the changing social conditions found to be impacting the role of the superintendent. Families and morals have changed; and dealing with the consequences of family break-up, family violence, sexual abuse, and neglect is taking more time at all levels within the school system -- whether in developing programs aimed at prevention and self help, or dealing with the unhappy consequences in the lives of children. Even student discipline has changed, requiring significantly more time in dealing with problems at the level of causes rather than attempting to control symptoms. And the legal framework surrounding education has become increasingly more complex, placing added pressure on the superintendent to comprehend constraints, and to be most adroit in working within the confines of the law.

There was general consensus among superintendents that population migrations and shifts, generally declining population, and the general level of educational attainment

of their publics had affected their role, producing a number of changes. Major or unanticipated migrations and shifts of the population created barriers to strategic planning, and the overall reduction in the number of students forced painful decisions upon superintendents as they attempted to maintain programs in spite of dwindling resources and reduced numbers of teachers. Amalgamating of schools, use of bussing, offering desirable programs in under-utilized schools, and regular incremental cut-backs were named as coping strategies by various superintendents.

The rapidly changing technology of recent years has touched both administration and curriculum. For administration, computers and facsimile machines have facilitated record keeping, supplies requisitioning, reporting, communication, and strategic planning; and have drastically reduced turn around time for correspondence, and correspondingly increased expectations for the same. At the curriculum level, technology is becoming increasingly important to both the processes and content of education. It has changed the nature of present and future job opportunities, necessitating a re-definition of the curriculum in response. In addition, courses must be added to teach the use of these new technological tools. And superintendents are placed under added pressure to process increased paper flow, to provide technological tools at both administrative and curricular level, to resource all these changes, and to become expert themselves in understanding all that is involved in to-day's technology explosion.

### *Conclusions*

This division of the chapter takes a synoptic and concluding look at how the findings of the study answer the major research question: "How has the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland changed since its definition in the 1969 Schools Act?" The conclusions of the study are that over the quarter century which has elapsed since 1969:

1. There has been a change in the role of the superintendent in Newfoundland, a change from "superintendent to superintendency," a change from being a somewhat authoritarian director running an organization, to a more consultative team leader employing new inter-personal and leadership skills. The sundry

duties of the various members of the team comprise a part of the overall role of the superintendent.

2. The relationship between superintendents and their schools has changed and changed again, beginning with a major movement toward centralization as control was wrested from supervising principals, and then reversing that trend as systems de-centralized by increased delegation or downloading of responsibilities to principals. The focus of attention of superintendents has moved farther away from the school. Particularly in the larger boards, present superintendents tend to have less (if any) contact with teachers at the program delivery level.
3. The relationship between the superintendent and the school board has changed as board members have become more educated, more sophisticated, more involved in educational issues, and less involved in administrivia. The old "advise and consent" routine where the superintendent advises, and board members consent has become obsolete. Authoritarian leadership no longer works. Superintendents continue to hold responsibility for developing a vision for their systems, but that vision must be a vision sharable with the membership of their boards.
4. The relationship with the public has changed as a variety of often well-educated and very articulate stakeholders press their demands upon the system. These stakeholders know the pressure points where administration is most vulnerable. To chart a steady course for their organizations, superintendents have been forced to develop clearer system priorities as they have been forced to respond to new and increased pressures -- the expectations for access, for programming, for student performance, and for a host of non-educational concerns.
5. The relationship with the public media has changed. The media have to some extent become a "watchdog" asking tough questions on behalf of parents and other stakeholders in the educational enterprise, and superintendents have learned to co-operate with the media and to a degree to exploit it to serve the purposes of their own organizations.
6. The role of the superintendent has changed in relation to providing the resources for education. As the funds and resources available from historic sources have dwindled relative to increased demands upon the educational system, superin-

tendents have been obliged to depend increasingly upon their own creativity in securing alternative funding and resources such as federal dollars.

7. The legal environment in which superintendents function has become increasingly complex as three Collective Agreements, human rights legislation, and numerous regulations such as accessibility, building, fire, and health codes further constrain the educational system. To-day's superintendents must be very alert to the implications of these constraints, and must often seek legal and other professional counsel as they pursue their organizational goals.

## *Implications of the Study*

The conclusions of this study have a number of significant implications -- (a) implications for the literature, (b) implications for practice, (c) implications for the conceptual framework, and (d) implications for further research. These three areas in sequence comprise the outline of the final division of this chapter.

### *Implications for the Literature*

The findings of this study have a number of implications for the literature.

***The skilful gardener metaphor.*** The conclusions of this study suggest a superintendent's role in harmony with the "administrator as a skilful gardener metaphor" of Coleman & Laroque (1990). Gardeners cannot dictate that plants will grow, they can only provide the supporting conditions in which growth is most likely to occur. As the shift has occurred from superintendent to superintendency, and as board members and other stakeholders have become increasingly involved in the educational enterprise, superintendents must rely increasingly on their capacity to influence, to persuade, to encourage, to gain consensus, to provide the environment in which desired system outcomes are most likely to be realized. "For administrators productive school or district ethos constitutes their particular contribution to educational quality" (p. 192).

***Factors having influenced change in the Newfoundland superintendency.*** The five forces identified by Williams (1992b) influencing education, and hence possibly the superintendency, were adopted as part of the conceptual framework of this study. Williams' forces were demand for higher standards, changing economic conditions,

changing social conditions, changing population dynamics, and changing technology. The findings indicate that superintendents agreed that while all of these comprise major forces which tended to change their roles, changing social and changing economic conditions were of particular importance. In addition, when superintendents' comments were systematized using content analysis, except for a very few of a personal or historic nature, it was not difficult to classify all comments/responses within this conceptual framework.

Griffiths (1966), Sullivan (1988), and Wirt (1990) were identified in the literature review as sources providing other lists of forces impacting education and/or educational leadership. Of Griffiths' list of four forces, coming from the USA and just before the beginning of the focal time period of this study, three were found to be relevant to some degree at least: the challenge of automation, federal government involvement, and teacher militancy, in descending order of importance. The fourth -- challenge of inter-racial tensions -- was not seen to be a factor in Newfoundland. Surprisingly, although much more recent and coming from a Canadian setting, the forces identified by Sullivan in the British Columbia Royal Commission Report (1988) were not recognizable as major forces shaping the role of the superintendent in Newfoundland except for the obvious inclusion of his "forces changing the family from a stable social unit to a more fragile institution," within the "changing social conditions" construct. Also, in a subordinate sense, Sullivan's "tension between the call of the frontier and the call of the school bell" appears to be related to the difficulties acknowledged by Newfoundland superintendents in retaining in the school system those students still lured away by the immediacy of an occasional employment opportunity, and those disillusioned by the seeming irrelevancy of schooling.

Wirt's (1990) list of factors and forces, again from the American perspective, was summarized in these words: "Administrators and their boards faced challenges from: minorities, over equal educational opportunity; parents, over accountability; taxpayers, over financial costs and equity; teachers, over collective bargaining; students, over civil rights; and, eventually, state and federal governments over mandates" (p. 8). If one were to recognize that "minorities" would include the handicapped, if one were to equate the American "civil rights" with the Canadian "human rights," and if the number of

recent federal forays into provincial jurisdiction by funding particular educational projects or encouraging provincial education to benefit by accessing federal dollars through federal funding programs such as HRD (Human Resources Development Program) could be construed to be a "challenge over mandates;" then all of the challenges identified by Wirt were found to exist in the Newfoundland setting. The applications are striking, and the forces identified by Wirt are real, but the particular conceptualization of forces which best suited the Newfoundland reality was nonetheless the Williams' framework.

***The superintendent as leader.*** Newfoundland superintendents became real leaders of their boards within just a few years after 1969. They continue to lead, employing among their leadership skills a new set of carefully-honed person skills -- the new emphasis on human relations identified by Speidelsbach (1988). In total agreement with the findings of the Genge study (1991), Newfoundland superintendents understood that to be effective they must have distinct priorities, a clear vision for their system, and the necessary "people skills" to lead. However, not all claimed to have met this ideal, acknowledging that the other pressures associated with administration too often kept them from their ideal -- their role in instructional leadership. Their comments in this regard supported the conclusions of Bjork (1993) that instructional leadership on the part of superintendents is imperative if schools are to be effective.

When it comes to the superintendent as instructional leader, the picture becomes rather blurred as the ideal meets reality. According to Wirt (1990), the requisite inter-personal skills by which superintendents carry out many of their duties predicate a new political-professional role for them. At the present, the majority of Newfoundland superintendents would be more accurately characterized thus than as instructional leaders. Williams' (1992a) vision of a re-emerging role as instructional leader at present is only a dream for the majority of superintendents in the Province.

### *Implications for Practice*

***Personal response of superintendents.*** The findings of this study are at the same time both an encouragement and a discouragement to present superintendents. As presented, a knowledge of the potency of the forces producing changes in the role of the superintendent, and the magnitude of the changes themselves will provide reassurance

that what each is experiencing individually is common to all. But the rate and magnitude of those changes presents a major challenge to superintendents to keep up and to adapt, because if they don't, as one superintendent said it, they will "go on to other things."

With reference to the role of the superintendent as an educational/instructional leader, in light of the concerns expressed by a number of superintendents, and in light of the modest success of a few others particularly in the mid-sized boards, it is imperative that all superintendents reflect seriously on their commitment to that ideal role, that they review their priorities, and that in consultation with their boards, they devise methods to more fully assume that role.

***School board selection and appointment of superintendents***. Because the face of the superintendency has changed and will continue to do so, school boards must exercise care in the selection and appointment of their superintendents. Along with requirements for competencies in areas such as facility and finance management, and personnel administration; and skills in areas such as visionary leadership, inter-personal communication, and relationship with the media; boards need to consider how their candidates will function as agents of change, and whether they are able to adapt their leadership styles appropriately and without undue stress or acrimony to the reality of a changing political/social/economic environment. Further, it is an anomaly of history that until December 1994, no woman had ever been appointed as a superintendent of education in Newfoundland. School boards need to note this fact, and seriously reflect upon the possibility that in their recruitment procedures they may be overlooking some of their best administrative and leadership prospects.

***Professional preparation of superintendents***. The changes in the role of the superintendent identified in this study require new skills and capabilities on the part of superintendents. Until now, usually beginning with generic administrative training and/or experience in a principalship or other subordinate administrative position, incumbents have generally been able to develop these special skills through on-the-job experience, often by trial and error, because as noted by Watson et al. (1989), there is a lack of formal training programs available in many regions. Considering the relatively small numbers of candidates for the superintendency likely to be needed in future, and given the lack of role-specific training programs, the nature of new skills required, and the

question whether some of the requisite dimensions of the superintendency can actually be taught in a formal setting (Watson et al., pp. 151-152), it is incumbent upon the Newfoundland Provincial Government in consultation with Memorial University, NLASE (Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Superintendents of Education), and possibly other maritime provincial governments to take the lead in the development and articulation of a revised formal training program for superintendents. This may require (a) further and ongoing research of the evolving requirements of the superintendency and the development of a program which will continue to change in response to newly identified requirements; (b) the distribution of program components across several universities throughout eastern Canada, (c) the secondment of incumbent superintendents as instructors in specific areas, and (d) provision for internships. Formal and adequate training is essential, because the superintendent of the future will not survive a repetition of some of the mistakes of the past.

***In-service needs of superintendents***. Areas in which the various superintendents expressed their felt need for increased skill and/or greater competency either personally or on the part of members of the superintendency team suggest topics for future in-service programs for superintendents. School boards will need to work through the NLSTA, the provincial Department of Education, and possibly the Denominational Educational Councils to provide in-service training for superintendents in the areas of (a) accessing alternative funding, (b) working within the constraints of an increasingly complex legal framework (c) conflict management and resolution, (d) co-operation with the mass media, and (e) the understanding and use of technology.

***Re-structuring of the educational system***. In the literature and among present Newfoundland superintendents, there is strong consensus that the most important or ideal role for superintendents of education is their role as instructional leaders. However, this study found that genuine instructional leadership was reported to have actually occurred in only a few instances, generally in the smaller (but not the smallest) boards. Especially in the larger boards, Wirt's (1990) political-professional role tended to dominate. Therefore, if the Williams' vision of superintendent as instructional leader is to become a reality in the future, care will have to be exercised on the part of government to avoid the creation of mega-sized school boards which are either very large in geography or in

student populations. Other structures and supports should be created to allow superintendents the freedom to exercise instructional leadership, as Wirt (1990) said it, "in the face of conflict and administrivia" (p. 5).

***Implications for the Conceptual Framework***

The specific conceptual framework of the study was presented in Chapter Two. This framework was not altered after the conclusion of the pilot study. The findings of the study suggest that a number of modifications should be made to it.

First, the shift from "superintendent to superintendency" would require that in the central box, "The Incumbent" be shown as a leader of team which shares collectively the various responsibilities listed. The specific skills required by the team to carry out this responsibility could be enlarged to include specific skills in accessing alternative funding, in encouraging followership, in communicating with the public via the mass media, in functioning dexterously within highly complex legal perameters, in managing conflicting demands and situations, and in the exploitation of technology.

Second, the new generation of school board member, becoming more involved in substantive policy issues and requiring information upon which to make informed decisions would suggest certain other changes. The factors identified under the "System" (the mid-sized box) could be altered or broadened to include such possibilities as increased demand for information, increased control of the decision making process, and expectations for the accountability of the superintendent.

And finally, the title of the specific conceptual framework should be changed to "The Role of the Superintendency."

***Implications for Further Research***

1. This study focused on the changing role of the superintendent from the perspective of those individuals who occupied or had recently occupied that office. It would provide additional insights into the evolution of the superintendency, if a parallel study were to be conducted from the perspective of school boards -- specifically by an analysis of school board minutes and other related documents.

2. During the interview stage of this study, numerous references were made to new and/or additional skills required of present superintendents. A study identifying and exploring the totality of specific skills required by present superintendents would be of great interest to incumbent superintendents, and should prove invaluable to institutions preparing future candidates for the superintendency.

3. One of the major findings of this study was the "shift from superintendent to superintendency," that to-day's superintendents view themselves as a leaders of a *superintendency team*. In 1983, shortly after the employment of assistant superintendents became the general practice in Newfoundland, Lane studied that role. A study of changes in the role of assistant superintendents over time, or a study of other of the various roles which comprise the superintendency would further broaden our knowledge regarding the role of the superintendency.

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# APPENDIX A

Questionnaire Cover Letter

Questionnaire

Questionnaire Supplement

2 Hagen Place
Mount Pearl, NF A1N 3X9
08 September 1993

Dear Superintendent

I am presently conducting a study of the **"Changing Role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland"** as a part of my doctoral program from the University of Alberta. Using a number of personal interviews, and a general questionnaire, it is my intention to examine the nature and the causes of role changes since 1969, and to characterize the present role of the Newfoundland superintendent.

You are requested to compete and return the accompanying questionnaire, which is a reproduction of a questionnaire developed by F. J. King, and completed by superintendents in Newfoundland in the late spring of 1970. I believe that the contrast between responses then and now will be very significant.

Your participation is **totally voluntary**, but since my study population is very small -- limited to present superintendents and those having retired since 15 May 1992 -- your participation is essential to the success of my research, and for it and your time I thank you in advance.

Your responses will be treated in a **totally confidential** manner. Only aggregated data will be used in the final report. The ID number pencilled onto your questionnaire is for clerical purposes, and will be removed once all returns are in prior to data tabulation and assimilation.

Page 10 is a supplement to the original questionnaire. It will help me to broaden the view of the present role of the superintendent, and to validate the study itself.

Again, thank you for your anticipate participation. Study results will be made available to all participants.

Yours truly

David R. Streifling

# QUESTIONNAIRE

## THE ROLE

## OF THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

## IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Definition and Description of the Role of the Superintendent

The statements which follow define or describe certain duties which may or may not be the responsibility of the district superintendent. They have been selected from relevant legislation and from the literature on school administration, and have been reworded for purposes of this questionnaire. They are not intended to be an all-inclusive description of the superintendent's role.

Instructions

Below is a list of items which may concern the superintendent employed by the local school board in Newfoundland. Please read all statements very carefully and respond to all of them on the basis of your own feeling without consulting any other person.

To answer, read each statement and then encircle the letter(s) among the five alternatives at the right which best indicates how closely you agree or disagree with this statement as part of the superintendent's role. Please try to respond to all items. MARK **ONE** CHOICE ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT.

The letter symbols represent the following responses:

SA - strongly agree
A - agree
U - uncertain or undecided
D - disagree
SD - strongly disagree

You may remove this page if you wish, and use it as a reference in answering the questionnaire.

## PART I: SUPERINTENDENT-SCHOOL BOARD RELATIONS

1. Carry out duties assigned him by the Education Act. **1. SA A U D SD**

2. Carry out duties assigned him by Board policies and regulations. **2. SA A U D SD**

3. Advise and assist the School Board in exercising its powers and duties under the Education Act. **3. SA A U D SD**

4. Attend all meetings of the Board and its committees, except where his own salary, tenure, or efficiency are under consideration. **4. SA A U D SD**

5. Advise the Board on policy matters. **5. SA A U D SD**

6. Carry the main responsibility of putting the Board's decisions into effect. **6. SA A U D SD**

7. Establish an administrative council of senior officials to assist him in solving problems. **7. SA A U D SD**

8. Prepare and draft policies and regulations for consideration and adoption by the Board. **8. SA A U D SD**

9. Initiate discussions with the Board on any aspect of the operations of the school system where he believes changes should be made or policies should be established. **9. SA A U D SD**

10. Furnish the Board with the information and advice it needs to establish sound policies in educational matters and in school administration. **10. SA A U D SD**

11. Keep the Board informed, through periodic reports, regarding the schools' objectives, needs, achievements, and plans for the future. **11. SA A U D SD**

12. Develop with the Board and staff long range plans for the improvement of the school system. **12. SA A U D SD**

13. Be responsible for the preparation and development of the detailed budget and fiscal policies for Board consideration. **13. SA A U D SD**

14. Approve the budget statement **before** its presentation to the Board. **14. SA A U D SD**

15. The Superintendent, rather than the Business Manager, presents the budget and other fiscal proposals to the Board for approval and adoption. **15. SA A U D SD**

16. Be responsible for the development of master plans of all building facilities and renovations of school facilities. **16. SA A U D SD**

17. Act as the formally established and recognized means of communication between the Board and staff, both professional and non-professional. **17. SA A U D SD**

18. Carry out decisions of the School Board with which he may not personally agree. **18. SA A U D SD**

19. Participate in professional negotiations as the representative of the School Board, negotiating with teacher representatives on behalf of the Board. **19. SA A U D SD**

20. Identify himself with the Board and its policies. **20. SA A U D SD**

21. Defend Board policies publicly even when he may personally disagree with them. **21. SA A U D SD**

22. Investigate and report in writing on matters as required by the Board. **22. SA A U D SD**

23. Take directions from individual School Board members. **23. SA A U D SD**

24. Strive to develop a strong team spirit among School Board, principals, teaching staffs, parents, and administrative staff. **24. SA A U D SD**

25. Act on his own initiative and assume discretionary powers if he feels that such action is in the best interests of the school system or of an individual child. **25. SA A U D SD**

26. Assume full responsibility on all professional matters -- e.g., teacher selection and placement, in-service education -- without seeking prior approval of the Board. **26. SA A U D SD**

27. In implementing Board policy, the Superintendent assumes full responsibility for issuing administrative rules and regulations without prior approval of the Board. **27. SA A U D SD**

## PART II: IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

28. Serve as a leader of the Board, the staff, and the community in the improvement of the educational system. **28. SA A U D SD**

29. Consider his primary responsibility to be the maintenance of the highest quality of instruction. **29. SA A U D SD**

30. Provide leadership in evaluating and improving the educational program in the district. **30. SA A U D SD**

31. Direct the development of programs for the school grades. **31. SA A U D SD**

32. Organize staff activities for upgrading the curriculum. **32. SA A U D SD**

33. Develop, with the co-operation of the staff, criteria for the selection of teachers. **33. SA A U D SD**

34. Initiate and direct curriculum studies within his own system. **34. SA A U D SD**

35. Conduct research concerning educational problems of the school and community. **35. SA A U D SD**

36. Co-operate willingly, re time and effort, with researchers who are attempting to advance knowledge in his field. **36. SA A U D SD**

37. Use the results of research in planning the educational program. **37. SA A U D SD**

38. Secure agreement among his educational personnel on the objectives of the schools in his system. **38. SA A U D SD**

39. Work more closely with principals than with teachers, and through the school principals communicate to the teaching staff what the administration and Board wish done within the school system. **39. SA A U D SD**

40. Encourage teachers to use new teaching procedures and materials. **40. SA A U D SD**

41. Secure first-hand information about the quality of the educational program through classroom visits and conferences with individual teachers. **41. SA A U D SD**

42. Inspect and evaluate the work of the teachers and report to the School Board and the Department of Education on their efficiency in instruction. **42. SA A U D SD**

43. Direct the preparation of curriculum materials and the selection of textbooks, workbooks, teaching aids, and classroom supplies. **43. SA A U D SD**

44. Secure outside help from "experts" when curriculum changes are being considered. **44. SA A U D SD**

45. Make curriculum changes without consulting the teaching staff. **45. SA A U D SD**

46. Make no major curriculum changes without first seeking public support. **46. SA A U D SD**

47. Make an annual report to the School Board and to the Department of Education on the educational program in his schools. **47. SA A U D SD**

48. Provide for a comprehensive program of periodic system-wide evaluation and use this information for the improvement of education in his schools. **48. SA A U D SD**

49. The Superintendent determines which school a pupil shall attend. **49. SA A U D SD**

50. Develop policies for promoting pupils from one school level to another. **50. SA A U D SD**

51. Retain the authority to expel pupils from school for failure to conform to school regulations. **51. SA A U D SD**

## PART III: OBTAINING AND DEVELOPING PERSONNEL

52. Recommend to the Board the appointment of professional employees on the basis of their qualifications for particular services. **52. SA A U D SD**

53. Recommend to the Board the appointment of non-professional employees on the basis of their qualifications for particular services. **53. SA A U D SD**

54. Assign professional staff to their respective duties. **54. SA A U D SD**

55. Select and nominate teachers for promotion. **55. SA A U D SD**

56. Recommend for suspension or dismissal a teacher or principal whose service does not meet his expectations or those of his supervisory staff. **56. SA A U D SD**

57. Participate in professional negotiations as a third part, serving as a resource both to the teachers and to the Board. **57. SA A U D SD**

58. Act as a liaison between teaching personnel and School Board. **58. SA A U D SD**

59. Involve both teachers and other professional staff members in Board meetings. **59. SA A U D SD**

60. The Superintendent handles teacher grievances. **60. SA A U D SD**

61. He and the Board handle teacher grievances. **61. SA A U D SD**

62. The Superintendent presides over grievance committees. **62. SA A U D SD**

63. Refrain from taking any part in professional negotiations, leaving the field entirely to representatives of the staff and the Board. **63. SA A U D SD**

64. Decide on the teaching of controversial social and political issues. **64. SA A U D SD**

65. Act on behalf of the Board in the negotiation of salaries of nonprofessional employees. **65. SA A U D SD**

66. Refuse to recommend the dismissal of a teacher the public wants dismissed if he feels that the public complaint is invalid. **66. SA A U D SD**

67. Seek able people for open positions rather than considering only those who apply. **67. SA A U D SD**

68. Give consideration to local values or feelings regarding race, religion, national origin, in filling vacant teaching positions. **68. SA A U D SD**

69. Make an annual report to the Board concerning each member of the teaching staff. **69. SA A U D SD**

70. Develop and keep a confidential file on his professional employees. **70. SA A U D SD**

71. Provide a program of training so that the custodial staff will operate the school plant effectively and efficiently. **71. SA A U D SD**

72. Secure the co-operation of the staff in carrying out recommendations and policies. **72. SA A U D SD**

73. Assume responsibility in selecting the administrative and supervisory staff. **73. SA A U D SD**

74. Transfer teachers from one school to another within the district. **74. SA A U D SD**

75. Consider the personal life and attributes of his subordinates in his evaluation of their merit. **75. SA A U D SD**

76. The Superintendent accepts full responsibility for the decisions of his subordinates. **76. SA A U D SD**

## PART IV: PROVIDING AND MAINTAINING FUNDS AND FACILITIES

77. Assume final and over-all authority over the business and financial affairs of the school system. **77. SA A U D SD**

78. Be responsible for expenditures authorized in the budget. **78. SA A U D SD**

79. Approve orders for supplies and equipment. **79. SA A U D SD**

80. Establish a budget committee to help him in drafting the annual budget. **80. SA A U D SD**

81. In drawing up the budget give priority consideration to cost factors over educational needs. **81. SA A U D SD**

82. See that proper accounting procedures are used. **82. SA A U D SD**

83. Arrange for the accounting system to be organized in sufficient detail to make computations of important unit costs possible. **83. SA A U D SD**

84. Report regularly to the Board on the status of all accounts covered by the annual budget. **84. SA A U D SD**

85. Submit reports regularly to each individual charged with the use of funds or supplies, indicating the status of his account. **85. SA A U D SD**

86. Sign cheques on behalf of the Board. **86. SA A U D SD**

87. Favor local firms in the awarding of school contracts even though this may increase school expenses somewhat. **87. SA A U D SD**

88. The Superintendent may transfer budgetary allocations, when necessary, from one section of the budget to another after the itemized budget has been approved and adopted by the Board. **88. SA A U D SD**

89. Provide professional advice to the School Board on planning new buildings, extensions, and renovations, and in arranging transportation systems. **89. SA A U D SD**

90. Make recommendations to the School Board with regard to boundaries of new attendance areas when new schools are opened. **90. SA A U D SD**

91. Prepare for the School Board a long-range capital construction program based on enrolment forecasts and anticipated expansion. **91. SA A U D SD**

92. Inspect all school buildings in the course of construction to ensure that they are being built in accordance with plans, specifications and contracts. **92. SA A U D SD**

93. Be responsible for the supervision and maintenance of school buildings and school equipment. **93. SA A U D SD**

94. Personally inspect all school plants at least once a year. **94. SA A U D SD**

95. Provide the Board with lists and specifications of school furniture, equipment, teaching materials, and supplies. **95. SA A U D SD**

96. Grant the use of school buildings and school facilities for community purposes. **96. SA A U D SD**

## PART V: MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY RELATIONS

97. Communicate to the public the Board's policies and enlist the public's support for the Board's program. **97. SA A U D SD**

98. Take an active part in School Board elections, such as campaigning for, or endorsing candidates. **98. SA A U D SD**

99. Diagnose, identify, and interpret community needs and expectations. **99. SA A U D SD**

100. Help the School Board and the community to assess the community's capacity to support the educational program. **100. SA A U D SD**

101. Encourage the formation of local committees to co-operate with the School Board in studying school problems. **101. SA A U D SD**

102. Assist in the co-ordination of school and community activities. **102. SA A U D SD**

103. Take an active part in the activities of parent-teacher associations. **103. SA A U D SD**

104. Maintain active membership in the teachers' professional association. **104. SA A U D SD**

105. Establish regular channels of communication with local media. **105. SA A U D SD**

106. Provide a speaker's bureau to accommodate invitations from major civic groups. **106. SA A U D SD**

107. Keep his office open to community members at all times. **107. SA A U D SD**

108. Favor the establishment of lay advisory committees in the administration of the school district. **108. SA A U D SD**

109. The Superintendent avoids involvement with factional groups in the community. **109. SA A U D SD**

110. Take a neutral stand on any issue on which the community is evenly split. **110. SA A U D SD**

111. Occasionally compromise with local pressure groups. **111. SA A U D SD**

112. "Play up to" influential local citizens. **112. SA A U D SD**

113. Write articles for professional journals which will be of benefit to others in the profession. **113. SA A U D SD**

114. Work on committees sponsored by the Department of Education and professional organizations. **114. SA A U D SD**

## Questionnaire Supplement

**RESPONDENT PROFILE** (Rounded off to nearer whole number, please give the number of years employed):

(a) as Superintendent in Newfoundland (____)

(b) as Assistant Superintendent in Newfoundland (____)

(c) in education administration in Newfoundland (____)

(d) in education in Newfoundland (____)

(e) in education anywhere (____)

If you have noted some aspect of your work not included in the previous 114 questions, kindly write it in and rate it as you have previous items.

115. _____

_____

_____ **115. SA A U D SD**

116. _____

_____

_____ **116. SA A U D SD**

117. _____

_____

_____ **117. SA A U D SD**

118. _____

_____

_____ **118. SA A U D SD**

# APPENDIX B

Questionnaire Response Summary

(Means of Weighted Responses)

by

School Board Size,
Geographic Region, and
Religious Denomination

**Table B-1** **Questionnaire Response Summary**

Part I: Superintendent-School Board Relations

| Item | Board size | | | Region | | | Denomination | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | S | M | L | W | C | E | Int | RC | 1972 | 1993 |
| 1 | 5.0 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 4.9 |
| 2 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.9 |
| 3 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 |
| 4 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.6 |
| 5 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 5.0 |
| 6 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 5.0 |
| 7 | 4.6 | 4.2 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| 8 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.8 |
| 9 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| 10 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 5.0 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| 11 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.7 |
| 12 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 |
| 13 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 3.9 | 4.5 |
| 14 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 3.6 | 4.6 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.4 |
| 15 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.3 |
| 16 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 3.7 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 4.1 |
| 17 | 4.4 | 4.0 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 4.4 |
| 18 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.1 | 4.7 |
| 19 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 4.6 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 3.8 |
| 20 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 4.8 |
| 21 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.4 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 4.6 |
| 22 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 4.8 |
| 23 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.5 | 1.6 |
| 24 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.9 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.6 |
| 25 | 4.2 | 3.9 | 4.4 | 3.9 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 3.9 | 4.2 |
| 26 | 2.7 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 2.3 | 3.1 |
| 27 | 2.3 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 2.5 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.0 |

**Table B-1** **Questionnaire Response Summary**

Part II: Improving Educational Opportunity

| Item | Board size | | | Region | | | Denomination | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | S | M | L | W | C | E | Int | RC | 1972 | 1993 |
| 28 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.1 | 4.9 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.6 |
| 29 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.2 | 4.8 |
| 30 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.7 |
| 31 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 3.8 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.5 |
| 32 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 3.1 |
| 33 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.4 | 4.4 | 3.9 |
| 34 | 3.1 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 4.3 | 3.6 |
| 35 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 4.2 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 3.4 | 4.5 | 3.7 |
| 36 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| 37 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| 38 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.5 |
| 39 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 3.9 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 3.8 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| 40 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| 41 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 3.9 |
| 42 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.7 |
| 43 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 3.5 | 2.6 |
| 44 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 3.8 |
| 45 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 1.7 |
| 46 | 3.2 | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 2.7 |
| 47 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.1 | 4.6 |
| 48 | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.4 |
| 49 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 4.1 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 4.4 | 3.4 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 3.5 |
| 50 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.5 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 4.0 |
| 51 | 3.8 | 3.2 | 3.9 | 3.2 | 3.8 | 4.1 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 2.8 | 3.6 |

**Table B-1** **Questionnaire Response Summary**

Part III: Obtaining and Developing Personnel

| Item | Board size | | | Region | | | Denomination | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | S | M | L | W | C | E | Int | RC | 1972 | 1993 |
| 52 | 4.7 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| 53 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.7 | 2.9 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 3.9 | 3.4 |
| 54 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.2 |
| 55 | 3.8 | 4.2 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 4.3 | 3.4 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.9 |
| 56 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.1 | 4.6 |
| 57 | 3.1 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 3.2 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 3.4 | 2.6 |
| 58 | 4.7 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 3.8 | 4.3 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.2 |
| 59 | 4.2 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 3.1 | 3.8 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| 60 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 3.2 | 4.4 |
| 61 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 3.4 | 2.9 |
| 62 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4.6 | 3.6 | 4.2 | 3.9 | 3.0 | 4.1 |
| 63 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.8 |
| 64 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.7 |
| 65 | 3.0 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.0 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| 66 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.6 |
| 67 | 3.7 | 4.3 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 3.5 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 4.3 | 3.9 |
| 68 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 4.0 | 3.6 | 3.3 |
| 69 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 2.4 | 1.7 |
| 70 | 2.8 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 2.2 | 3.6 | 3.0 |
| 71 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 3.3 | 3.7 | 3.8 |
| 72 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.6 |
| 73 | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 3.8 | 4.9 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.2 |
| 74 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 4.5 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 3.9 | 4.1 |
| 75 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 4.3 | 3.6 | 3.2 |
| 76 | 3.4 | 4.2 | 4.8 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.0 | 3.0 | 4.2 |

Table B-1

## Questionnaire Response Summary

Part IV: Providing and Maintaining Funds and Facilities

| Item | Board size | | | Region | | | Denomination | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | S | M | L | W | C | E | Int | RC | 1972 | 1993 |
| 77 | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 3.9 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 3.0 | 4.3 |
| 78 | 3.8 | 4.5 | 4.3 | 4.7 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 3.8 | 3.0 | 4.2 |
| 79 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 2.7 | 1.8 | 3.9 | 2.4 |
| 80 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 3.8 | 4.5 |
| 81 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 1.9 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.6 | 2.3 |
| 82 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.1 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.4 |
| 83 | 4.6 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.0 | 4.3 |
| 84 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 3.5 | 4.3 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.8 |
| 85 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.8 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 3.4 |
| 86 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 2.5 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 3.1 |
| 87 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 1.9 |
| 88 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 2.8 |
| 89 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.0 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.4 | 4.6 |
| 90 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| 91 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.1 | 4.7 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.6 |
| 92 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| 93 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 3.3 |
| 94 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 4.4 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 3.6 |
| 95 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.2 | 2.9 | 3.5 | 3.0 |
| 96 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.5 |

**Table B-1** **Questionnaire Response Summary**

Part V: Maintaining Effective Community Relations

| Item | Board size | | | Region | | | Denomination | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. | S | M | L | W | C | E | Int | RC | 1972 | 1993 |
| 97 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.4 | 4.7 |
| 98 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 1.1 |
| 99 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| 100 | 4.7 | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| 101 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.3 |
| 102 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.3 | 4.3 | 3.5 |
| 103 | 3.4 | 2.6 | 2.2 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 2.3 | 3.8 | 2.7 |
| 104 | 2.9 | 2.2 | 1.6 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 3.7 | 2.2 |
| 105 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.5 |
| 106 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 4.1 | 3.5 | 3.6 |
| 107 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 3.7 | 4.3 |
| 108 | 3.4 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 3.0 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.1 |
| 109 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 3.5 | 3.6 |
| 110 | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 2.0 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.1 |
| 111 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 3.0 | 2.8 |
| 112 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.5 |
| 113 | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.7 | 4.1 | 4.3 |
| 114 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.3 | 4.6 |

# APPENDIX C

Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Stratification Criteria by School Board

**The Changing Role of the Superintendent**

# *REVISED* INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. The major research question is: **How has the role of the Superintendent of Education in Newfoundland changed since its definition in the 1969 Schools Act?**

2. Ethical considerations
   (a) Acknowledge tape recorder.
   (b) Tape will be erased, and interview transcripts destroyed upon completion of the study.
   (c) Confidentiality -- will report only aggregated statistics, and other information in such a manner to protect the identity of the respondent.
   (d) A synopsis of study findings will be made available to study participants.

3. In your opinion, what have been the **nature of changes in the role of the Newfoundland superintendent** since 1969?

4. F. J. King studied the role of the superintendent in 1970 - 1972 under five areas. What changes have you observed in each since 1969?
   (a) superintendent-school board relations
   (b) improving educational opportunity
   (c) obtaining and improving personnel
   (d) providing and maintaining funds and facilities
   (e) maintaining effective communications.

5. In your opinion, what have been some of the **causes of changes in the role of the Newfoundland superintendent** since 1969 (social/political/economic trends etc.)?

6. Williams (1992) identified five forces impacting education. How has each of these impacted the role of the superintendent?
   (a) demand for higher standards
   (b) changing economic conditions
   (c) changing social conditions (e.g. human rights)
   (d) changing population dynamics
   (e) changing technology.

7. What other issues do you see relating to the subject of this study?

Table C-1

## Stratification Criteria by School Board

| Board | Exper'nc of superintend | Enrolment | Size | Region | Religious Denom |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 101 | 9 | 3 317 | Medium | Western | Integrated |
| 103 | 5 | 3 704 | Medium | Western | Integrated |
| 104 | 11 | 2 589 | Medium | Western | Integrated |
| 105 | 1<br>23 | 3 565 | Medium | Central | Integrated |
| 106 | 24 | 2 616 | Medium | Central | Integrated |
| 107 | 5 | 7 189 | Large | Central | Integrated |
| 109 | 0<br>5 | 5 833 | Large | Eastern | Integrated |
| 110 | 14 | 7 987 | Large | Eastern | Integrated |
| 111 | 15 | 11 235 | Large | Eastern | Integrated |
| 112 | 4 | 2 901 | Medium | Central | Integrated |
| 113 | 4 | 1 514 | Small | Central | Integrated |
| 114 | 6 | 2 092 | Small | Western | Integrated |
| 115 | 12 | 5 749 | Large | Western | Integrated |
| 117 | 0<br>4 | 2 175 | Small | Western (Lab'r) | Integrated |
| 118 | 0<br>19 *(24) | 1 672 | Small | Western (Lab'r) | Integrated |
| 129 | 4 | 3 497 | Medium | Eastern | Integrated |
| 401 | 4 | 6 289 | Large | Central (prov.) | Pentecostal |

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**Stratification Criteria by School Board**
(Continued)

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 502 | 4 | 3 772 | Medium | Central | R C |
| 504 | 11 | 6 913 | Large | Eastern | R C |
| 506 | 6 | 2 326 | Small | Central | R C |
| 507 | 15 | 1 930 | Small | Eastern | R C |
| 508 | 18 | 2 234 | Small | Central | R C |
| 509 | 8 | 3 634 | Medium | Western | R C |
| 510 | 9 | 2 648 | Medium | Western (Lab'r) | R C |
| 512 | 9 | 4 962 | Large | Western | R C |
| 514 | 4 | 19 126 | Large | Eastern | R C |
| 701 | *(2) | 303 | Small | Eastern (prov.) | 7th-day Adventist |

* Includes years as program co-ordinator while board was too small to qualify for a superintendent.